

# MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

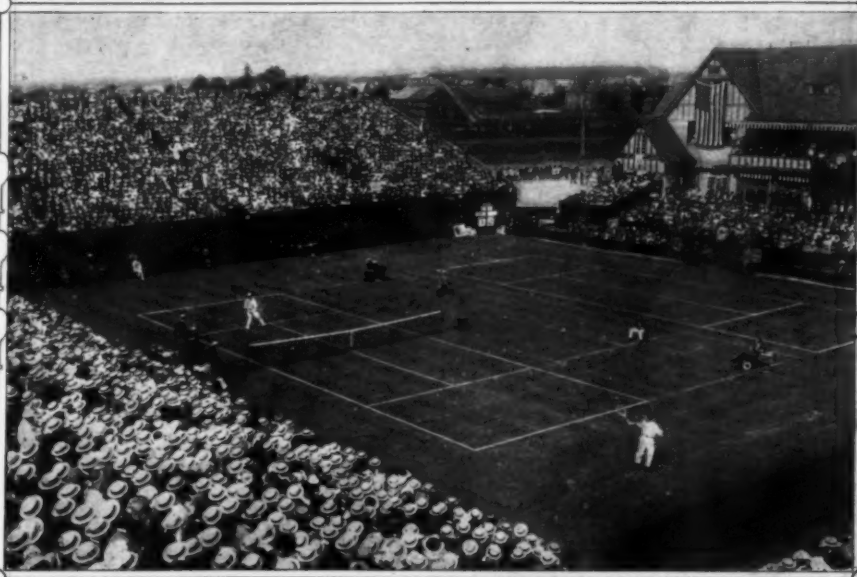
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## THE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP OF 1916

By DANIEL, of the NEW YORK SUN

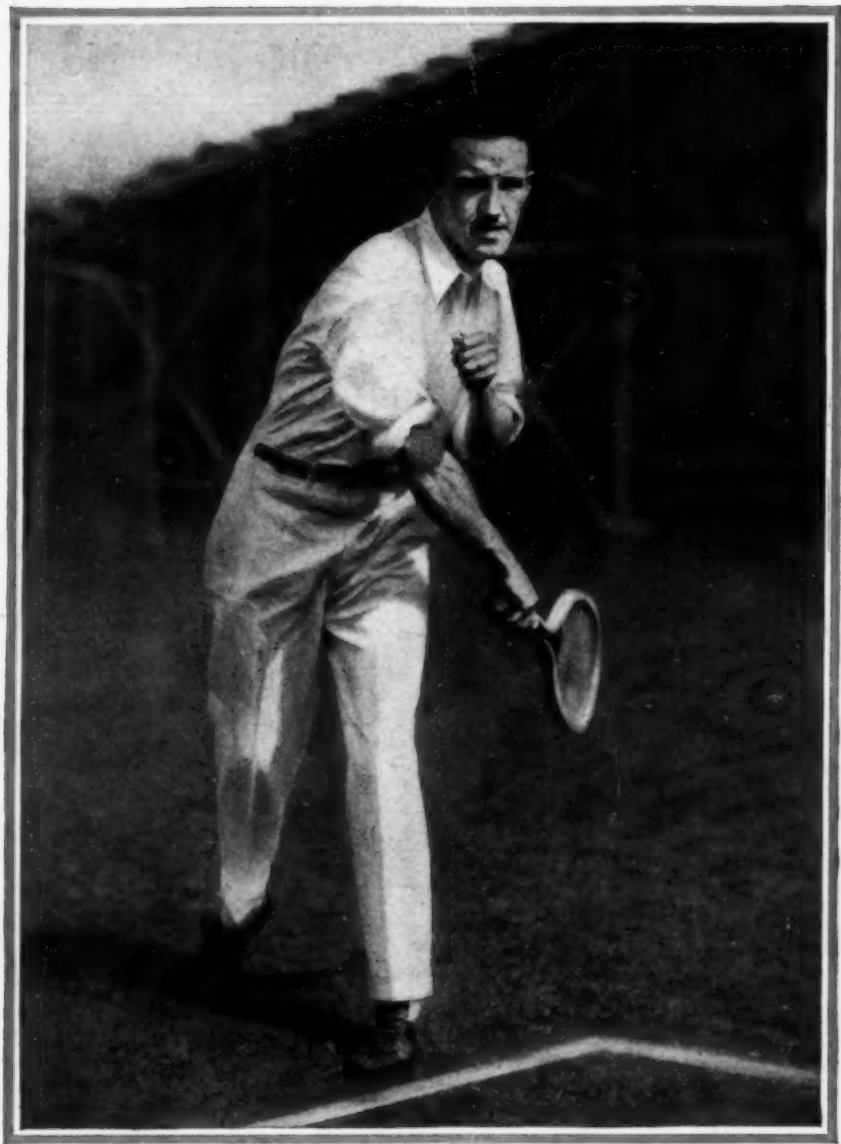


TURF COURTS, GRAND STAND, AND CLUBHOUSE OF THE WEST SIDE TENNIS CLUB, AT FOREST HILLS, DURING A CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH—THIS VIEW WAS TAKEN LAST YEAR, AND THE SCENE WILL BE PRACTICALLY REPRODUCED DURING THE TOURNAMENT OF 1916

TO whom will fall the crown of American lawn-tennis in the coming battle for the championship? Will it return to the great Maurice E. McLoughlin, who held it in 1912 and 1913? Will William M. Johnston, who won it so brilliantly last summer, once more assert his supremacy? Can R. Norris Williams, conqueror of McLoughlin in

1914 come back into his own? Nor is the field of speculation limited to these three famous performers, already wearers of the laurel. Is it not possible that some new meteor of the tennis firmament may outshine all the older stars? Is there any chance of a surprise from the Japanese invader, Ichaya Kumagae?

All these questions will be answered on



WILLIAM M. JOHNSTON, OF CALIFORNIA, HOLDER OF THE SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP, WHICH HE WON IN 1915 BY DEFEATING R. NORRIS WILLIAMS IN THE SEMIFINALS AND MAURICE E. MCLOUGHLIN IN THE FINAL MATCH

*From a photograph by Paul Thompson, New York*

the fine turf courts of the West Side Tennis Club, at Forest Hills, Long Island, soon after the present article appears. For the second time since the national championship tournament was instituted, thirty-five years ago, it will be staged

away from Newport, on the more democratic grounds of a New York club, beginning on August 28.

In February of last year, when the radicals of the United States Lawn-Tennis Association voted to make the transfer



from the classic turf of the American summer capital, the conservatives held up their hands in horror. It was nothing less than a sacrilege! But at this year's meeting none dared to dispute the advisability of holding the championship tournament at Forest Hills, only fifteen minutes from the heart of Manhattan Island, and



MAURICE E. MCLOUGHLIN (LEFT), WINNER OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1912 AND 1913, AND THOMAS C. BUNDY (RIGHT), BOTH OF CALIFORNIA—MCLOUGHLIN AND BUNDY WON THE DOUBLES TITLE IN 1912, 1913, AND 1914, BUT LOST IT LAST YEAR TO JOHNSTON AND GRIFFIN

*From a photograph by Levich, New York*



R. NORRIS WILLIAMS, OF PENNSYLVANIA AND HARVARD UNIVERSITY, WINNER OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1914

*From a photograph by Levick, New York*

the hub of an area that includes more tennis-players and tennis enthusiasts than any other district of equal size.

The good worked by the transfer to New York last year, while already very much in evidence, especially among the younger players, cannot as yet be appreciated fully. It has developed among the so-called masses an intense interest in a sport that was supposed to be largely of the classes.

As we face the issue to be decided shortly after the appearance of this magazine, we are forced to the realization that never before in the history of our national championship tournament has it been so open a proposition. Not only in tennis, but in most other amateur sports, conditions have gradually developed to a stage that brings home the truth of the famous Shakespearean adage, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." There are so many skilful performers nowadays that no champion can count upon a long continuance in his supremacy.

We have left behind forever, I believe, the state of things that made possible perennial title-holders like William A. Larned, who was seven times champion — five times in uninterrupted succession. Without disparaging the glory of such a record, it is undeniable that present conditions promote the best interests of tennis much more than those which gave Larned, Richard D. Sears, Robert D. Wrenn, and Malcolm D. Whitman their long tenure.



MISS MOLLA BJURSTEDT, THE NORWEGIAN TENNIS-PLAYER WHO HAS SWEEPED EVERYTHING BEFORE HER IN AMERICA, AND IS THE HOLDER OF THE WOMEN'S TURF-COURT, CLAY-COURT, AND INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

*From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York*

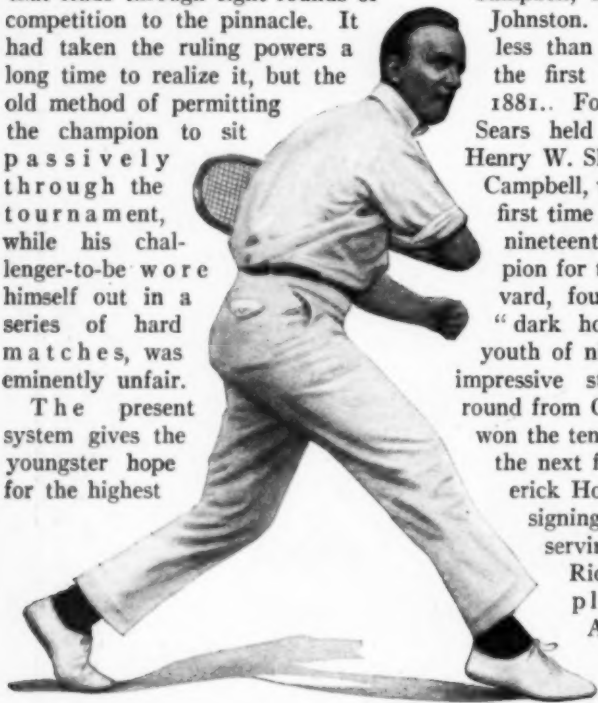
Much has been done for the game by the rise of the Western school of tennis-players. Indeed, it is not too much to say that California has been responsible for a new era in the history of the sport. The Golden State has given us our pre-eminent place in the tennis world, and

has made us realize that championship tennis is a competition of youth.

Until McLoughlin, in 1912, displaced Larned as champion, the title had usually been held by players of longer experience, and several times by men who might be ranked in the veteran class. The institu-

tion of the playing-through system made youth, vigor, condition, and the highest ability absolute requisites for any one hoping to travel the hard and thorny path that leads through eight rounds of competition to the pinnacle. It had taken the ruling powers a long time to realize it, but the old method of permitting the champion to sit passively through the tournament, while his challenger-to-be wore himself out in a series of hard matches, was eminently unfair.

The present system gives the youngster hope for the highest



THEODORE ROOSEVELT FELL'S BACKHAND STROKE, WHICH IS REGARDED BY ALL THE TENNIS EXPERTS AS THE MODEL OF WHAT A BACKHAND STROKE SHOULD BE

*From a copyrighted photograph by Brown Brothers, New York*

in tennis. One of the greatest things that ever happened in the game here was the victory of Johnston last summer, when he successively toppled over Behr, Williams, and McLoughlin in his dash for the singles title, and with Griffin wrested the doubles honors from McLoughlin and Bundy. The success of Johnston, a youth just out of his teens, endowed with no remarkable physique—in fact, a mere stripling of one hundred and twenty pounds—demonstrated that youthful brilliance, and not the court generalship of the veteran, is the most potent factor in winning the highest laurels.

In thirty-five years of championship tournaments, we have had fourteen champions, and of these four were champions at twenty. They were Sears, Oliver S. Campbell, Robert D. Wrenn, and Johnston. The first-named was less than twenty when he won the first American championship in 1881. For seven years in succession Sears held sway, until displaced by Henry W. Slocum, Jr., in 1888.

Campbell, when he won the title for the first time in 1890, had just passed his nineteenth birthday. He was champion for three years. Wrenn, of Harvard, four times title-winner, was a "dark horse" when, in 1893, as a youth of nineteen, he came through in impressive style, taking the challenge round from Campbell by default. Wrenn won the tennis crown three times during the next four years, losing it to Frederick Hovey in 1895, and finally resigning it in 1898, when he was serving with Roosevelt's Rough Riders during the brief unpleasantness with Spain. Among his fellow soldiers in that famous regiment were two other tennis champions—an earlier one, Campbell, and a later one, Larned.

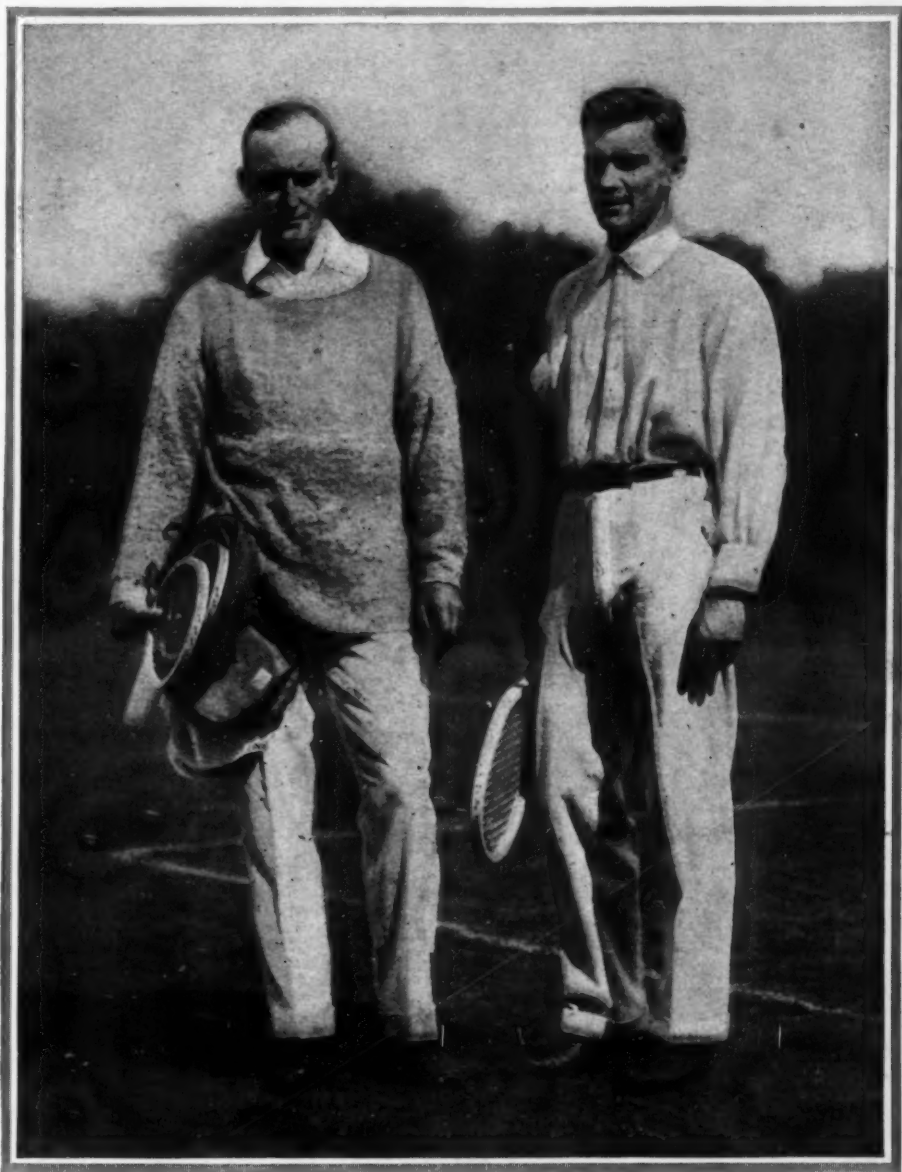
Whitman's three-year tenure followed, and then, in 1901, came Larned's first championship. The latter repeated his success in 1902, but in 1903 he was defeated by the English crack, H. L. Doherty, and it was not until 1907 that he reestablished his supremacy, which remained unbroken until he retired five years later.

Doherty, the only foreigner who has held the title here, was twenty-seven at the time of his victory. Three other one-time champions of this period—Holcombe Ward, Beals Wright, and William J. Clothier—were about a year younger. Hovey, winner in 1895, was also twenty-seven. McLoughlin, who succeeded to the laurels resigned by the veteran

Larned, was twenty-two when he scored in 1912. Williams, who won in 1914, was twenty-three.

This year, at twenty-six, McLoughlin may perhaps be making his final appear-

ance in a national championship tournament. The California Comet has two legs on the championship bowl, and of course he is keenly anxious to score the third and gain permanent possession of



THEODORE ROOSEVELT PELL AND KARL H. BEHR, BOTH OF NEW YORK, TWO OF THE LEADING TENNIS-PLAYERS OF THE EAST—LAST YEAR BEHR STOOD FOURTH AND PELL FIFTH IN THE OFFICIAL RANKING

*From a photograph by Levick, New York*





MISS MARY BROWNE, OF CALIFORNIA, WINNER OF THE WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1913 AND 1914

*From a photograph by Levick, New York*

the trophy. It is understood that his connection with the sale of athletic goods may result in his retirement from the ranks of amateurdom. That such will be the case I do not venture to predict, for the subject was prominently discussed last winter, and no action was taken by those in authority. But some observers argue that with this contingency in view McLoughlin will make a specially determined attempt to clinch his hold upon the coveted prize at the Forest Hills meeting. With such an incentive behind his formidable powers, they declare, his rivals will find it a tremendous task to keep him at bay.

It need scarcely be said here that McLoughlin needs no motives other than those of the cleanest sport. Those who know him are fully cognizant of that.

A large public regards the California Comet as the ideal exponent of tennis. He has the physique, the head, and, above all, the tremendous driving power that have combined to develop the sort of game for which America has become famous. He is a thoroughly popular champion. The American boy has come to know him almost as well as such baseball heroes as Christy Mathewson or Hans Wagner.

The rise of McLoughlin marked a new development in tennis on this side of the Atlantic and the style that was at first regarded as an individual freak has come to represent the ideals of our game. Its most outstanding



MRS. EDWARD RAYMOND, OF NEW YORK, WHO WAS DEFEATED BY MISS BJURSTEDT IN THE FINAL ROUND OF THIS YEAR'S WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

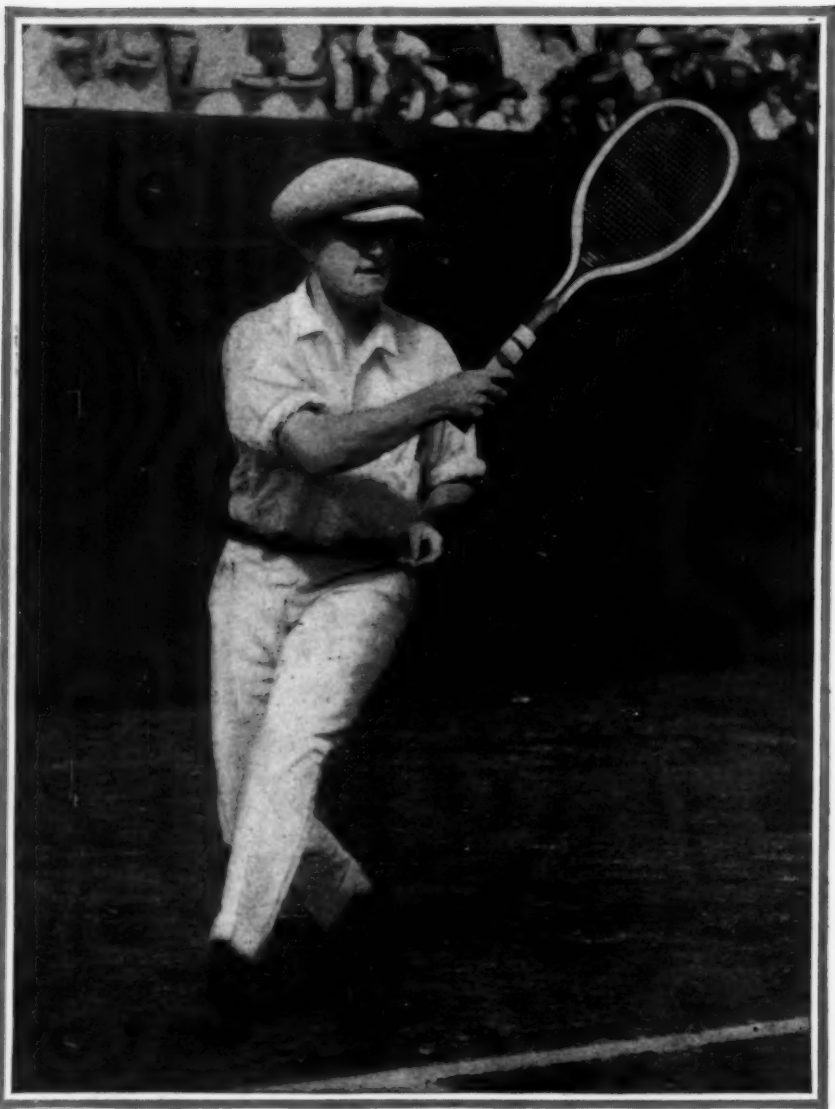
*From a photograph by Levick, New York*

feature is the terrific power and accuracy of his overhead strokes. His cannon-ball service, too, has become famous in tennis circles throughout the world.

It was an Australian expert who, on seeing the Californian attain a speed never before known in the Antipodes, gave Mc-

Loughlin the sobriquet of the Comet. This was in January, 1912, when the youth from San Francisco was a member of the ill-fated Davis Cup expedition to the Land of the Southern Cross.

The field at Forest Hills will include a notable array. If all the expected con-



CLARENCE J. GRIFFIN, OF CALIFORNIA, WHO LAST YEAR STOOD SEVENTH IN THE OFFICIAL RANKING AND WON THE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP WITH WILLIAM M. JOHNSTON

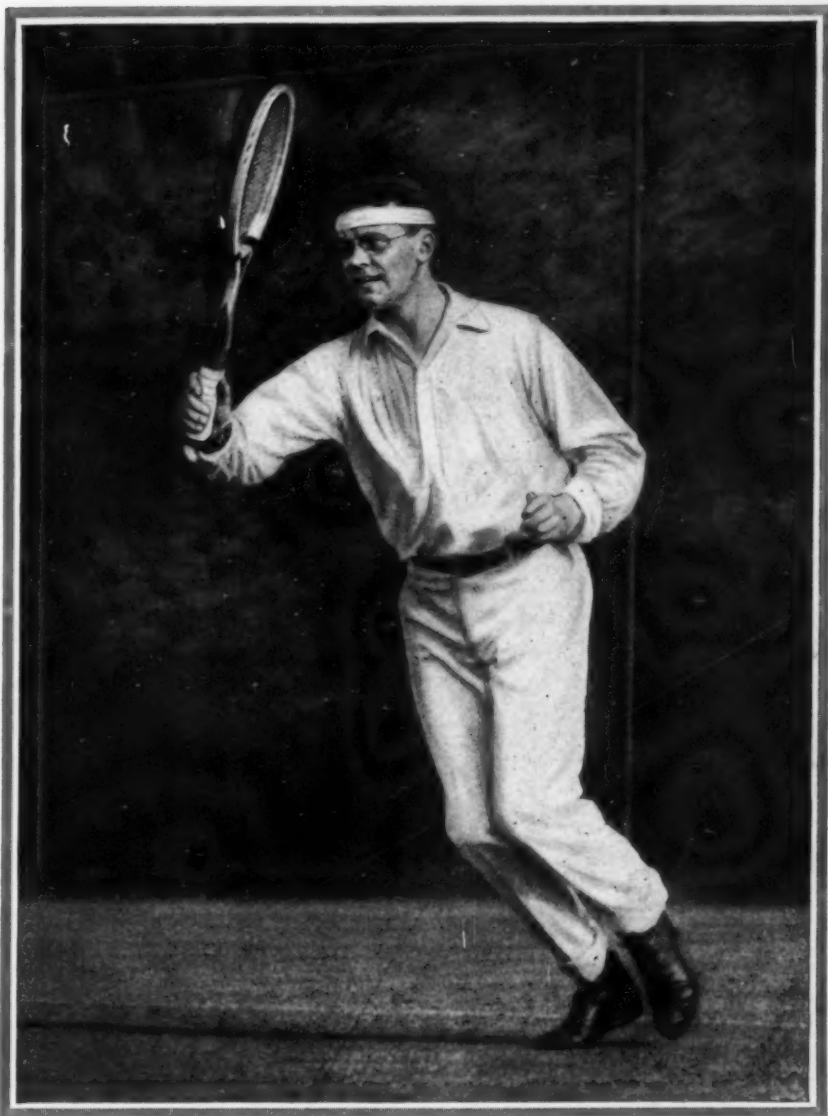
*From a photograph by Levick, New York*

testants appear, they will form the most brilliant galaxy ever gathered in the history of the championship.

Johnston, superb in his brilliance and matchless for his forehand drive, will be picked as a probable winner by many of the prophets. The series of victories that gave him the title last year proved that

he was no "fluke" champion, for the fortunes of the draw sent him against the very best of the other aspirants. His chances of repeating his whirlwind rush to the front would seem to depend to a great extent upon his physical condition.

It is not easy for a player of such slight build to go the pace with the other stars.



NATHANIEL W. NILES, OF MASSACHUSETTS, WHO STANDS AT THE HEAD OF THE BOSTON TENNIS CONTINGENT, RANKING SIXTH IN THE OFFICIAL LIST FOR LAST YEAR

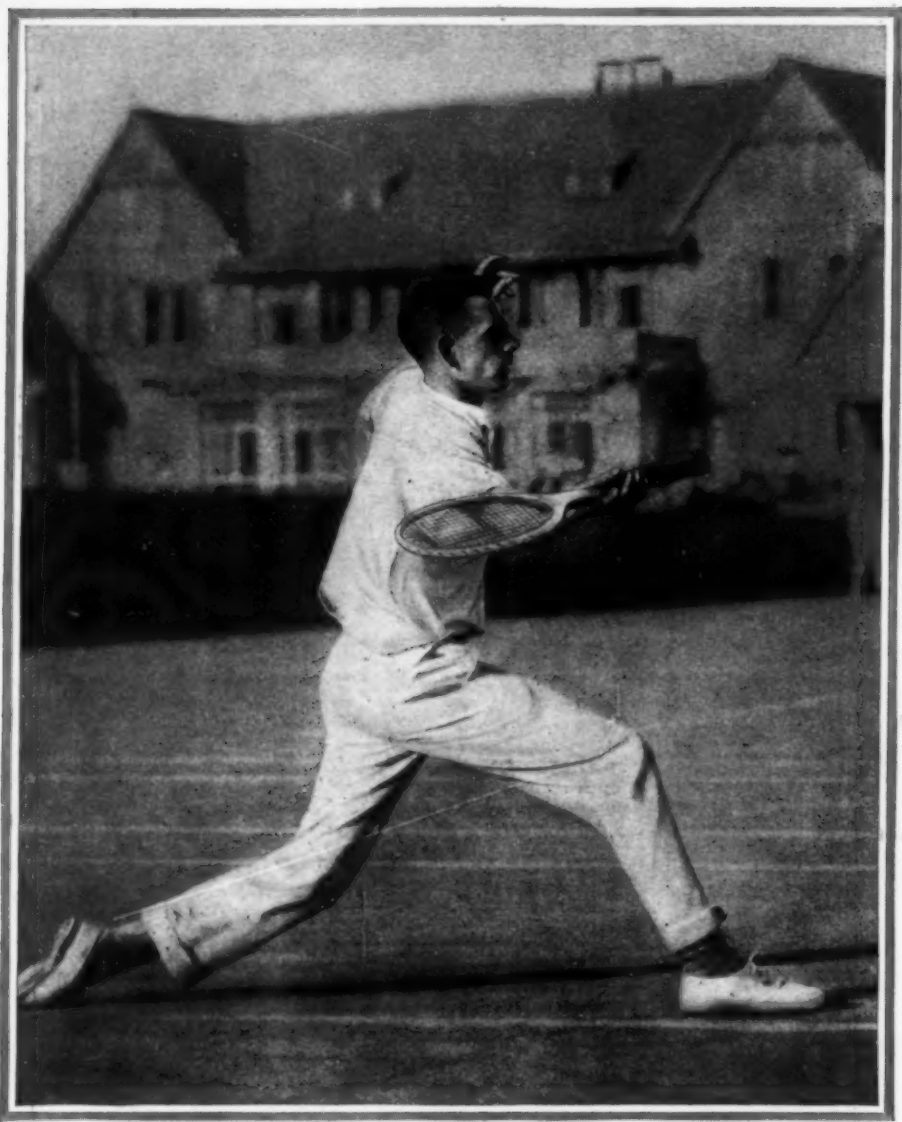
*From a photograph by Levick, New York*

Too much play puts him off edge, and leaves him a victim to performers who should really not take even a set from him.

Last summer Johnston was fortunate to strike the physical ebb at Southampton, just before the national tourney. At For-

est Hills he came back to form, but had to play through the concluding matches largely on his nerve. For a time it was feared that the exertion had affected his heart.

Johnston is, above all things, a heady player. He has plenty of speed, but he



GEORGE M. CHURCH, OF NEW YORK, ON THE COURTS AT FOREST HILLS—CHURCH, A FORMER PRINCETON CAPTAIN, WAS NINTH IN THE OFFICIAL RANKING FOR LAST YEAR

*From a photograph by Levick, New York*

does not play the cannon-ball game that McLoughlin and others have made famous as the typical California brand of tennis. Knowing his limited physical capacity, he has developed a style in which he brings off his volleys and overhead strokes with the least possible exertion. His forehand

stroke and "follow through" are regarded as models by all the experts. It is understood that he has recently been working to improve his backhand, which, though by no means weak, has hitherto compared unfavorably with the other features of his game.



The brightest hopes of the East will be pinned to R. Norris Williams, champion two years ago, and possessor of perhaps the most graceful and finished all-round style to be found in the tennis world. At the time of writing this, there

is a lack of information as to Williams's recent doings. In the spring, as a member of the Harvard team, he gave promise of developing his 1914 form. In early July, however, he declined to defend the national clay-court title at Cleveland; and it was



MRS. GEORGE W. WIGHTMAN, WHO, AS MISS HAZEL HOTCHKISS, OF CALIFORNIA, HELD THE WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1910 AND 1911—SEVERAL OF THE LEADING FEMININE PLAYERS WILL APPEAR AT FOREST HILLS IN AN INVITATION MIXED-DOUBLES TOURNAMENT

*From a photograph by Levick, New York*

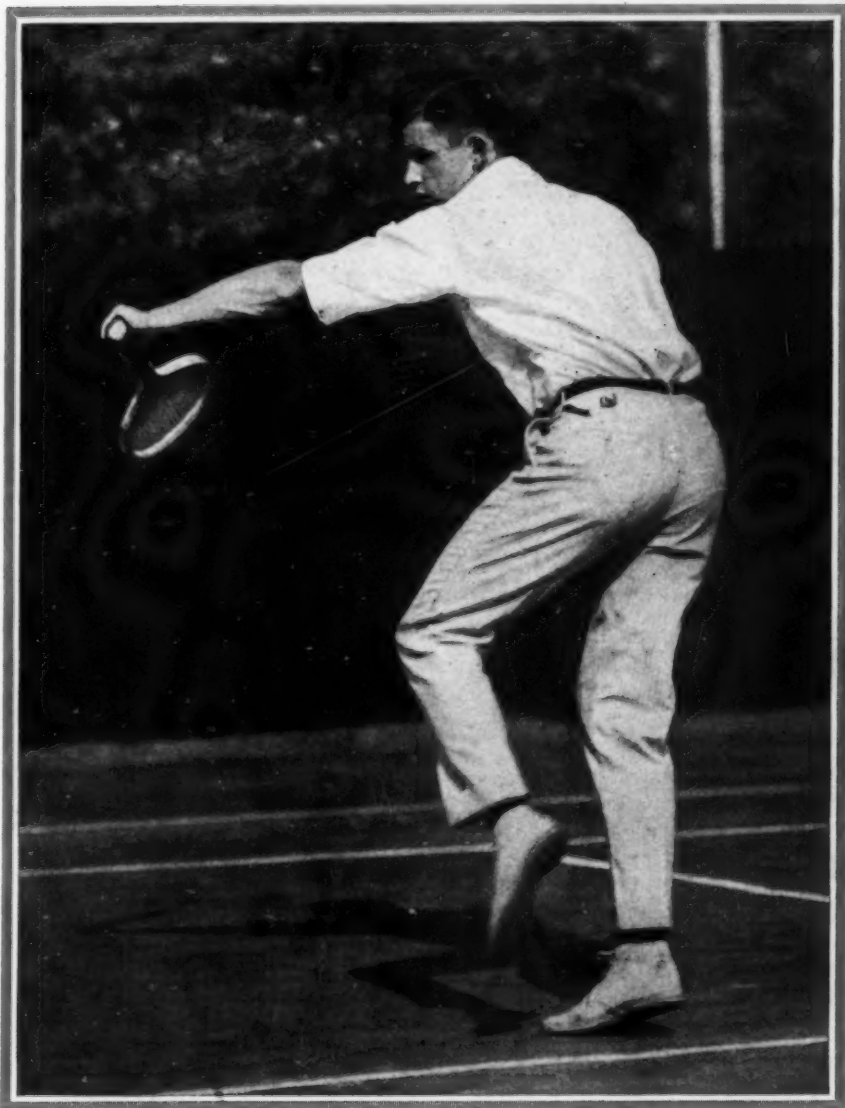


HAROLD A. THROCKMORTON, ONE OF THE MOST PROMISING OF THE YOUNGER PLAYERS—  
LAST YEAR, REPRESENTING THE WOODBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL, THROCKMORTON  
WON THE INTERSCHOLASTIC CHAMPIONSHIP AT FOREST HILLS

*From a photograph by Paul Thompson, New York*

announced that he had gone to the Glacier National Park, in Montana, for a holiday. It may be surmised with a strong degree of probability that he will reappear in plenty of time for the championship tournament, ready to bid for the prize with all his strength and skill.

A second edition of McLoughlin is Robert Lindley Murray, chemist by vocation, tennis dynamo by avocation, national indoor champion, graduate of Leland Stanford, and a decided favorite with the tennis-loving public. Murray is a disciple of the school of speed, and, once



R. LINDLEY MURRAY, THE METEORIC YOUNG PLAYER FROM CALIFORNIA WHO WON THE INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP LAST WINTER—IN EARLY TOURNAMENTS OF THE PRESENT SEASON HE ONCE LOST TO THROCKMORTON AND ONCE DEFEATED HIM

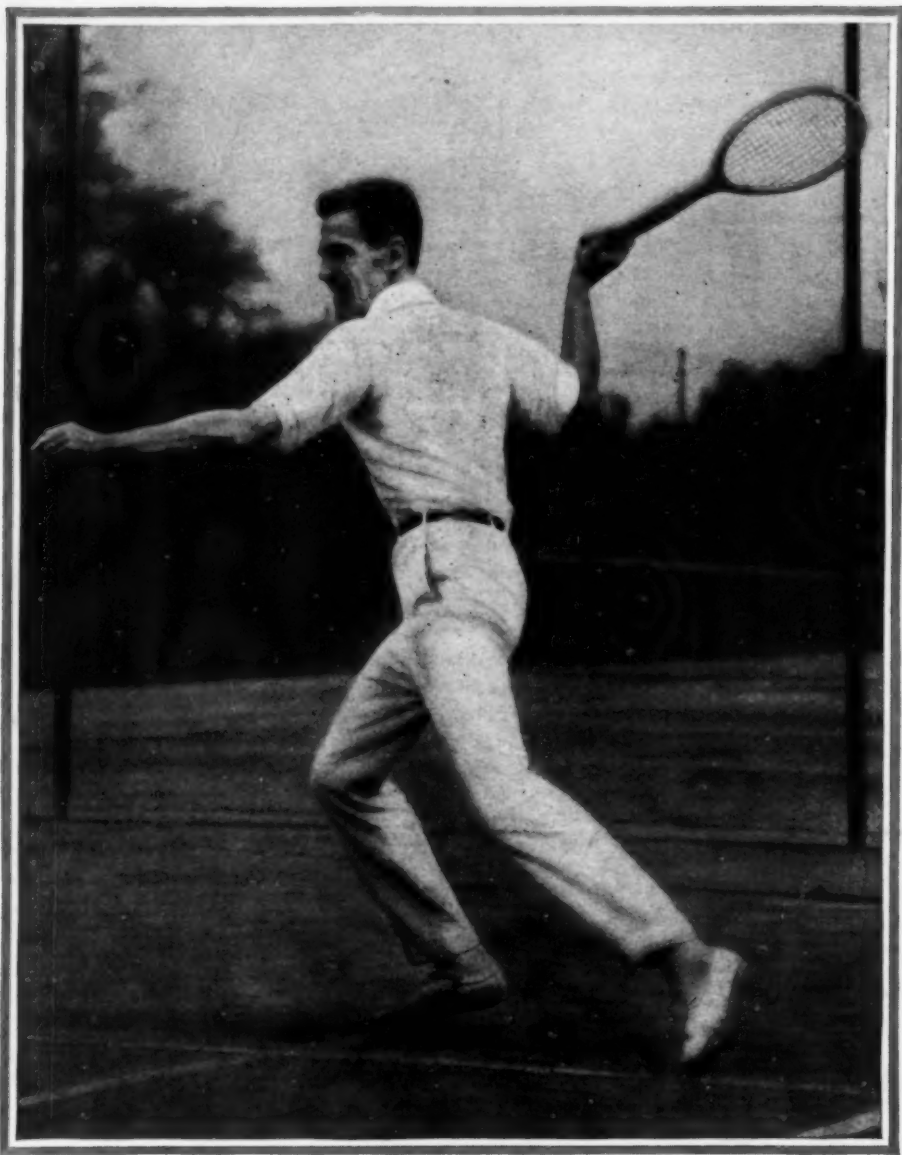
*From a copyrighted photograph by Levick, New York*

in action, never stops. He is on his toes all the time, and even while waiting for a service will dance about nervously.

Because of his duties at Bayonne, New Jersey, Murray has been unable to do much tournament campaigning this year, but he is bound to make his presence felt

at Forest Hills. He comes of an athletic family, Fred Murray, the Leland Stanford hurdling star, being his brother. At college he was something of a half-miler.

California will be represented at Forest Hills by the most powerful combination that the Golden State has ever



WILLIS E. DAVIS, OF CALIFORNIA AND THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, ANOTHER BRILLIANT YOUNG PLAYER, WINNER OF THE NATIONAL CLAY-COURT CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT, HELD AT CLEVELAND AT THE END OF JUNE

*From a photograph by Levick, New York*

sent forth to battle. In addition to McLoughlin, Johnston, and Murray, there will probably be Clarence J. Griffin, Willis E. Davis, Ward Dawson, and John R. Strachan, all of whom have already made their mark in the East, and such

new stars as Roland Roberts, Harold Van Dyke Johns, of Leland Stanford, and McCormick and Warren, of the University of Southern California, intercollegiate champions of their State.

Griffin, holder with Johnston of the

national doubles title, was placed seventh in the official ranking for the season of 1915. Willis E. Davis, a student at the University of Pennsylvania, made his metropolitan tournament debut at the Sleepy Hollow Country Club in June of this year, and emerged as a winner over Harold A. Throckmorton in the final, after the latter had beaten Murray in the semifinals earlier in the same day. Davis followed this up by winning the clay-court championship, at Cleveland, on July 1, defeating Conrad Doyle, of Washington, in the final round. Both Griffin and Strachan have been among the earlier holders of the clay-court title.

Of the first ten in last year's ranking, seven were Eastern men—though California would no doubt have had more than three representatives in the list had all her star players come within the ken of the official judges. Besides Williams, the seven included Karl Behr (fourth), Theodore R. Pell (fifth), Nathaniel W. Niles (sixth), Watson M. Washburn (eighth), George M. Church (ninth), and Walter Merrill Hall (tenth). All of these are formidable players in any company, and several of them are young enough to have before them no small possibility of further advancement.

Of the six, Pell probably showed the strongest tennis in the earlier part of the present season, notably in his decisive defeat of Behr for the Middle States championship, early in July. It is only fair to note, however, that Behr's patriotic activity in National Guard work had interfered with his practise.

Church, a former Princeton captain, who in 1914 defeated Williams for the intercollegiate title, is a player whose tennis career may not yet have reached its zenith. He is typically a volleyer and net player, but he is also a hard, all-round worker and a thorough student of the game. He can devote his time to it without heeding the distracting call of business, for he is the possessor of a large private fortune. Up to the time of writing his chief performance of the pres-

ent summer was his capture of the metropolitan championship at Bronxville, where his opponent in the final was his doubles partner, Dean Mathey.

#### INVADERS FROM THE FAR EAST

And now we come to the "Far Eastern peril"—the first invasion of American tennis-courts by championship-seekers from Japan. Kumagae and Mikami are the only foreign competitors in the sport this season, and their advent has received a marked degree of attention. They know tennis and can play it. That much has been proved at the time of writing, but it does not appear at all likely that they can beat our best players.

Kumagae is decidedly the stronger player of the two, and holds the championship of the Orient, which he won at Manila last January. Americans will regard that achievement with more respect when it is explained that in the final Kumagae defeated Clarence Griffin in straight sets, the scores being 10-8, 6-3, 10-8. In the semifinal round Griffin defeated Mikami, 7-5, 3-6, 6-3, 6-1, while Kumagae eliminated Ward Dawson, the young Californian, at 6-4, 6-4, 6-2.

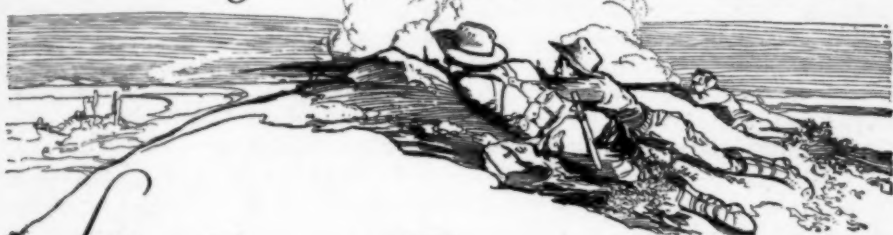
Whatever degree of success Kumagae and Mikami may have at Forest Hills, it is quite likely that the Japanese will some day prove worthy tennis rivals for America. They are tireless, remarkably agile, and quick to learn. Kumagae has a tricky left-hand service and a powerful drive, both forehand and backhand. He will run from one end of the court to the other to make a "get," and will usually land it. He keeps at top speed, with an utter disregard for conservation of energy. He is hardly five feet in height, while Mikami measures only half an inch over five feet.

In addition to the singles championship, the tennis carnival at Forest Hills will include the challenge match for the doubles title, the national boys' and junior championship competitions, and in all probability an invitation mixed doubles tournament.



# The Flag

## A Story of the Mexican Border



by James Francis Dwyer

THROUGH the open door of the saloon one could see the desert stretching southward. It looked sinister, weird, menacing. The hot winds gathered up handfuls of gray sand, twirled them into fantastic shapes, and set them dancing mad rigadoons across the wastes.

Spikes of giant cactus stood up against the curiously tinted sky, suggesting, to the imaginative, huge spears in the grip of invisible foemen crawling toward the border-line. At the cavalry camp, a flag flapped angrily, as if resenting the hot, vicious winds that tried to drag it from its pole.

Four men sat near the doorway of the saloon and stared at the sand stretches, which were now a peculiar leaden color in the light of the late afternoon. One was a cavalryman from the camp—Sergeant Thomas Hurley, khaki-clad, trim, clean, and efficient-looking. Sitting next to him were two grizzled cattlemen from the Aracoor Ranch, their faces so lined with sweat rivulets that they resembled intricate war-maps.

The desert was the enemy of the cattlemen. They had battled with it for years, fighting the devilish blasts when the jinn of the wastes flung the hot sand in their faces, hating the deadly gray stretches

that bred terror. The desert was Mexico, and the cattlemen detested Mexico.

The fourth man was an unusual type. He was a bigger man than any of the three, taller and broader; and, although he was not out of place, he did not look like a border fixture. Sergeant Hurley and the two cattlemen blended into the landscape, but the fourth man carried the look of a traveled person who, while appearing perfectly at home in any setting, had about him the atmosphere of a nomad to whom the winds of space called constantly.

He was a mining engineer, named Ventnor. With his daughter, he had come up from Hermosillo, and was now waiting at the little border town to receive instructions from his company in New York.

After a long silence the cavalry sergeant spoke.

"It's the devil's own country," he said softly. "I hate to think of our boys goin' into it, but we'll have to, I'm thinkin'. If any one gets a belief that he can dance the tango on the Stars an' Stripes, the sooner the belief is extracted from his system the better!"

One of the cattlemen nodded his head in approval. The other made a guttural noise that sounded like a curse strangled

in its infancy. The mining engineer was apparently counting the big brass-headed tacks on the fly-screen.

There was another period of silence. The two cattlemen, leaning forward, stared at the trail upon which they would soon have to ride. The cavalry sergeant watched the distant flag that resented the desert winds. Ventnor, the engineer, counted the brass tacks assiduously.

It was the cavalryman who again attacked the silence.

"I'm thinkin' that we'll have to teach some of our neighbors that a bit of cloth marked in a certain way can't be used for a door-mat," he said.

"Huh, huh!" growled one of the cattlemen.

"Huh, huh!" said his mate.

"Shucks!" said the mining engineer, dragging his gaze away from the fascinating brass tacks and turning it upon Sergeant Hurley. "Shucks!"

The sergeant turned swiftly and looked at Ventnor. The soldier's brows were lowered the slightest trifle, and a little glint of fire appeared for an instant in the cold, blue eyes.

"What's that?" he inquired softly. "What did you say?"

"I said 'Shucks!'" answered the engineer. "All this talk about insulting the flag makes me tired."

"Isn't it your flag?" asked Hurley.

"I've got no flag," said the engineer.

"No?"

The sergeant looked surprised. The two cattlemen turned slowly and glanced at the man who asserted that he had no national emblem.

"Listen," said the mining engineer. "I've been round the world three times, and I'm half-way round on my fourth circuit. I report on mines, and mines have a pesky habit of getting into out-of-the-way spots. I've been in all the tough corners of the world, from Coolgardie to Kara Bay, and I haven't asked protection from any flag." He paused and placed his hand upon his gun-belt, then went on in the same quiet tone. "I and my daugh-

ter travel under the protection of Mr. Colt. I'd sooner have him behind me than any flag in the world. Give me a good gun and the stuff to feed it, and I'll look after myself anywhere!"

"Mebbe, mebbe," said the sergeant softly; "but a flag is a flag, an' it cannot be walked on. It's—it's—well, I don't know how to express it, but it's everything we ever done from Bunker Hill to Vera Cruz. It means things—lots of things!"

"What things?" asked the engineer.

"What things?" cried the sergeant, raising his voice. "Why, it means that the blood of brave men was spilled in the makin' of it. It means to hell with oppression an' tyranny an' bandits an' women-murderers! Do you get me? It means freedom wherever you see it wavin', freedom to think an' to act; an' if any one interferes—" He paused, stood upright, and faced Ventnor; then, with his close-cropped head thrust forward, he asked a question. "Mister, would you mind tellin' me where you were born?"

"I was born in Texas," answered the engineer.

"Glory be to Heaven! An' you don't thrill when you see that piece of buntin' over there?"

"I told you I've got no flag. I'm traveling under the protection of Colt & Co."

"An' you don't own your own flag?"

"I don't own or disown any flag. They are nothing to me. They've never protected me. The crowd that fought at Bunker Hill fought to dodge taxes. You mention Vera Cruz. Well, the men who went there had no right to be there."

"Easy, easy!" said the cavalryman. "I knew a good lad who was killed at Vera Cruz."

The atmosphere had grown suddenly electric. The sergeant wet his dry lips and glared at the engineer. The two cattlemen remained silent, their corrugated brows hinting at fierce mental endeavors to follow the arguments of the renegade.

Ventnor got to his feet, and the cattlemen also rose, moving in a slow, tentative

fashion, as if wondering whether their mental processes would be improved by the change of position. The engineer moved to the door, turned, and in a tired voice addressed Sergeant Hurley.

"I'm talking about flags, not friends," he said quietly. "There's a big difference, and—"

"There's no difference!" interrupted the soldier. "The flag is my friend, the best friend I've got. When I think of the flag, I think of little Bobby Devlin, who was shot at Vera Cruz when he was carryin' it. All the memories of our dead are in that flag! Aye, sir! It flew over 'em when they chased the enemy, an' it covered their dead bodies when they went under; an' may the holy saints look after the good boys that went to their death for love of it. If I—"

The sergeant stiffened suddenly. His right hand came to the salute as the soft notes of a bugle came from the camp; his eyes were fixed upon the flag that came slowly earthward. The cattlemen touched their hats. The mining engineer made no movement.

Sergeant Hurley's right hand dropped to his side, and he wheeled swiftly. He took a quick step toward the engineer, who was regarding him with a look of careless indifference.

"I thank the Almighty that there are few of your sort!" he cried hotly. "You were born an American, but you're too goldarned miserable an' small-souled to respect your flag!"

"Go slow, my man," said the engineer in a voice that was little more than a whisper. "Go slow!"

"Why should I go slow?" cried the sergeant. "It's my flag! I'm fightin' for it, an' if any one speaks disrespectfully of it, I'm—"

"Say," interrupted Ventnor, "if I had that flag you just saluted, I'd ram it down your throat to stop you from talking so much about Bunker Hill and Vera Cruz, where your little friend got hurt. If—"

The engineer's remarks were cut short. The cavalryman's right fist shot forward

with the speed of a swift-driven missile. It landed on the chin of the big man, and he went staggering backward through the doorway into the road, where a six-inch cushion of dust eased his fall.

He was up in an instant, his eyes blazing, his white teeth showing slightly between tight-drawn lips. For an instant he stood inactive; then, with a quick movement, he unbuckled his gun-belt, tossed it aside, and sprang at the cavalryman. The two cattlemen gave a grunt of approval when he discarded his guns, and they stood aside so that the two combatants could have plenty of room.

Sergeant Hurley had braced himself for the rush. The blue eyes that had blazed when Ventnor had spoken sneeringly of the flag were cold and hard as they looked out through narrowed lids.

Ventnor swung with his right, but the soldier's head ducked neatly out of the way of the engineer's fist. Hurley's left went straight from the shoulder as the large man staggered, and Ventnor's nose came immediately in its path. A right up-percut followed, and the engineer grunted. He gave ground, and Hurley came after him.

A tough man was Sergeant Thomas Hurley. His troop tell of a battle royal he had with four Spaniards in Manila, and there is an affair connected with the Barbary Coast in the old days that has made his name known to the whole United States Army.

The sergeant's right again connected with Ventnor's jaw, but the soldier received two fierce blows in return. Ventnor made another rush, swinging both arms in a mad effort to break down the soldier's guard. The feet of the two, as they tramped around in the road, raised a dust-cloud that nearly blinded them. The fine, gray powder got into their throats and nostrils, and made them at times unable to find each other; but they fought ferociously.

Ventnor ran in to a clinch, and they went to the roadway together. They threshed around in the dust like two mon-

ster serpents; then Hurley tore himself loose and got to his feet. He was breathing heavily, but his courage was unshaken.

"Get up!" he cried. "Get up, an' I'll teach you to sneer at the flag! I'll teach—"

The soldier's remarks were cut short. Ventnor had lifted himself suddenly from the dust and had flung himself forward. His left fist collided with Sergeant Hurley's ear and the cavalryman staggered sidewise. The engineer landed a right and another left before the soldier recovered his balance, and one of the cattlemen allowed a little exclamation of annoyance to come from between his dry lips as Hurley was driven backward.

Pressing his advantage, Ventnor drove a fierce uppercut at the sergeant's chin, but the chin shifted swiftly to one side. The flying fist sped upward, and Ventnor's jaw was exposed. The soldier's right went out like a battering-ram; the engineer gave a little surprised gasp, and dropped to the ground.

## II

SERGEANT HURLEY wiped his dusty face and spoke haltingly.

"Little Bobby Devlin was my own sister's son," he said huskily. "If any one says he didn't have a right to carry the Stars an' Stripes in Vera Cruz, why, I'll batter the head off—holy smoke, here's Lieutenant Gaskell!"

Sergeant Hurley straightened himself with difficulty as a tall, athletic-looking young man swung round a corner into the dusty road and approached him. To make matters worse, the lieutenant had a companion—a companion so young and beautiful that Sergeant Hurley, to whom the fair sex always appealed, forgot his own predicament for an instant as he stared at her.

The girl's little feet hardly touched the powdered dust of the road, and the hot winds that had annoyed the flag took keen delight in playing with her unbound tresses of black hair. Her eyes were as dark and as deep as the fabled well which the Indians say is out in the White Desert, and

her slender figure had the grace of a wood-nymph.

For a moment the girl's eyes were fixed upon the upright form of Sergeant Hurley, who stood, dust-covered and battered, facing his superior; then they turned to the engineer, whom the two cattlemen were helping to his feet. For a second she paused as if the suppleness had suddenly fled from her young limbs; then, with a startled cry, she sprang forward.

"Daddy! Daddy!" she screamed. "Oh, my daddy!"

The engineer was on his feet and able to stand without the help of the cattlemen, but the marks of battle were plainly visible. His lips and nose were much swollen, and he made a rather ludicrous appearance as he attempted to smile in an effort to dispel his daughter's fears.

"I'm all right, little one," he said softly. "Don't worry!"

"But, daddy, why—what—who—" The girl paused and swung swiftly upon the lieutenant, who was frowning at Sergeant Hurley. "Lieutenant Gaskell," she said, "this is my father." Then, turning again to the engineer, she went on: "Lieutenant Gaskell came to call upon you this afternoon. He wanted to tell you that an attack is expected, and that our house, being nearest to the line, would probably be the first attacked."

The lieutenant saluted and the engineer bowed; then Gaskell turned to the khaki-clad victor.

"What is the meaning of this, sergeant?" he asked.

"We had a fight," answered the soldier.

"That's evident," snapped the lieutenant. "What about?"

Sergeant Thomas Hurley looked his superior squarely in the face.

"I don't know," he said.

There was a moment's silence; then one of the cattlemen spoke.

"Ventnor said things about the flag, an' the sergeant punched him," he explained simply.

"Why did you say you didn't know?" asked the lieutenant sharply.



"Because," said Sergeant Hurley, taking a big breath, "I was just wonderin' whether I dreamed that he said things about the flag, or whether he really did say 'em. If the cow-punch said he did, he must have; but just for a minute I had doubts, sir. You see, he's an American, the same as you an' me."

The lieutenant looked at the girl and her father. The girl was wiping the man's face with a ridiculously small handkerchief, the man protesting unavailingly. No one seemed inclined to speak.

Gaskell broke the silence.

"You'd better go and get the dust off your clothes, Hurley," he said quietly. "Tell Captain Edwards I'm on my way back."

Sergeant Hurley saluted and turned away. The two cattlemen drifted through the door of the saloon. Half a dozen other loafers followed Hurley half-heartedly.

Lieutenant Gaskell spoke to the girl, who stood apart, while her father picked up his gun-belt and slowly buckled it around his waist.

"Now that I've met your father, Miss Ventnor," he said in a matter-of-fact voice, assumed in order to make the girl forget the fact that the meeting was under anything but ordinary circumstances, "I'll give the message which you kindly undertook to deliver."

"What's the message?" asked Ventnor, without lifting his eyes.

"It's a message from Captain Edwards," answered the lieutenant. "He thinks there's danger of an attack from Lopez and his band. As your house is so far out of the town, he thinks it would be advisable for you to send Miss Ventnor to the hotel. Lopez is a woman-murderer, and perhaps it would be well not to take chances."

The engineer took time to finish buckling his belt, then straightened himself and stood upright.

"Your sergeant told you the truth about the cause of this fight," he said brusquely. "I told him I had no flag, and perhaps I said a few sharp things about his. I

haven't a flag, and I don't want one. I'm able to look after myself and my daughter. Give Captain Edwards my compliments, and tell him that we stay where we are. If Lopez comes raiding, we'll look after ourselves. Good evening, lieutenant."

He bowed stiffly, Lieutenant Gaskell returned the salute, and the engineer, with a "Come, Beatrice," took the hand of the surprised girl and started in the direction of the white cottage which stood like a pariah outside the boundary of the little town.

### III

It was a wonderful night. The stars were awash in the soft, velvety atmosphere. The hot winds that had dragged at the flag above the cavalry camp had died away, but little flickering breezes, carrying the odors of the desert, played with the flaps of the tents and touched the faces of the sleeping soldiers.

Lieutenant Gaskell couldn't sleep. He turned from one side to the other, pounded his pillow fiercely with his fist, and counted myriads of sheep and horses in an effort to woo slumber. Finally he gave up the attempt, rose, and dressed himself.

Sitting outside his tent, he filled his pipe and let his mind dwell upon the girl whom he had met that afternoon. Lieutenant Gaskell had seen Beatrice Ventnor a dozen times since the cavalry troop had been moved up to guard the border, but the message he had delivered that afternoon had given him his first opportunity to talk to her. As he smoked he pictured her supple figure, the beautiful oval face with the dark, unfathomable eyes, the unbound tresses at which the hot winds had tugged during the walk from the white cottage to the town.

"She's a wonderful girl," he said softly. "She is—hello there! Who's that?"

"Sergeant Hurley, sir," came the answer out of the darkness.

"Come here a moment, sergeant."

Sergeant Hurley came briskly across the patch of beaten sand and stood at attention.



"Did Ventnor tell you that he was an American?" asked the lieutenant.

"Yes, sir. He told me he was born in Texas."

"And what did he say about the flag that made you fight?"

"He said the bunch that fought at Bunker Hill fought to dodge taxes, an' the boys who died in Vera Cruz had no right there."

"That's strange, for an American to talk like that!"

"You're right, sir. It's more than strange. But now an' then a guy like him gets queer ideas into his head, an' he thinks no more of the flag than Lopez thinks of it. I'm thankful they're few an' far between."

"So am I, sergeant. Did he say where his daughter was born?"

"He did not, sir."

"All right, sergeant. That's all I wanted you for. Good night!"

"Good night, sir!"

Sergeant Hurley wheeled and tramped off across the sand to his sleeping-quarters, where he used wick-hazel copiously upon several parts of his face where the fists of the engineer had landed.

Lieutenant Gaskell remained outside his tent. As midnight approached the little noises from the town died away. The lights went out one by one, and a stillness heavy and intense stole over the border outpost. The lieutenant's pipe dropped from his lips; he leaned back against the canvas of the tent and fell into a deep slumber.

Lieutenant Gaskell's dreams took him back to his home State, the State of fair women and good horses—Virginia. He dreamed that he was at a race-meeting, and, sitting on the stand, he heard the thunder of hoofs as the horses turned into the straight. The shouts of the crowd came to his ears as the favorites flashed down the grassy stretch. He strained his ears to distinguish the names which the men and women who surrounded him were screaming with the full power of their lungs.

Suddenly Lieutenant Gaskell heard! A cold chill of fear swept over him. He clutched the canvas sides of the tent. Sleep held him with heavy fingers, but he fought himself free.

The shouts were plain to him now. He heard them distinctly; but they were not the shouts of race-course enthusiasts cheering their favorites down the homestretch. They were the shouts of frenzied murderers, the shouts of mad, loot-hungry bandits, whose wild cries went up into the soft, velvety night!

*"Muerte a los gringos! Viva Lopez! Lopez! Viva Lopez!"*

Lieutenant Gaskell sprang to his feet. The crackling of rifle-shots came from the sandy roadway and the arroyo. The yell of a sentry, the neighing of startled horses, and a quick, hoarse command came to him as he leaped across the clearing.

He cannoned against Captain Edwards, who shouted out an order as the lieutenant reported.

"Lopez, Gaskell!" the captain cried. "He came up the arroyo! Take a squad down by the cactus hedge and cut him off—quick!"

The lieutenant found himself running at the head of a dozen men, who followed him in grim silence. The night was thick, heavy, resentful of the noises that came from the bandit horde. And it was so dark that the lieutenant could not discern the cactus hedge that bordered the path along which he ran. Now and then a cavalryman blundered into the spiky barrier and swore fiercely in an undertone.

The lieutenant reached the edge of the arroyo, and halted. The yelling and rifle-firing came from the sandy roadway. For a few minutes he and his squad were in a zone of comparative quiet; then a spurt of flame split the darkness immediately in front, a bullet whined by the lieutenant's ear, and a soldier behind him made a curious little sound and pitched forward on his face.

Another and another spurt of flame followed the first, and from the opposite bank of the arroyo the yells of "Viva

*Lopez!*" went up into the night like hot rapiers that fell upon the soft, velvety silence and sent a million echoes fleeing across the desert. But Gaskell's men were busy now. They didn't yell. Silently, grimly, they pumped a stream of lead across the dry arroyo, and the bandits acknowledged the accuracy of the fire by interlarding mad curses into the yells for their leader.

"Give it to 'em!" cried the lieutenant. "Give it to 'em, boys!"

The fire of the soldiers was too deadly for the bandits. Gaskell's ear caught the order to retreat shouted by their leader, and he sprang from behind his shelter.

"After them, boys!" he yelled. "Charge!"

With a wild cry the men, thirsting for revenge, streamed after the lieutenant. The bandits sent a hail of bullets at them as they rushed up the bank, but they swept onward and upward. The first pale yellow of the dawn had crept into the sky, and the bandits were dimly perceptible as they broke cover and fled to a spot where their horses were tethered.

#### IV

A BURST of red flame shot up into the sky at the moment when Gaskell's men came out of the arroyo, and the lieutenant caught the words of one of his own men running immediately behind him. The man was Sergeant Hurley.

"It's the engineer's cottage!" cried the sergeant. "The devils have fired it!"

The lieutenant paused for an instant and looked in the direction of the fire. Before his eyes there came a picture of a sweet, oval face, black hair like the hair of Muana, the sea goddess, and eyes as deep and dark as the fabled well of the White Desert.

"Are you sure, Hurley?" he cried.

"Certain," answered the sergeant. "There's only one cottage in that direction, and that's Ventnor's."

Lieutenant Gaskell became a crazed man at that moment. He outraced his men as they charged the bandits, who,

with all their thoughts upon flight, were endeavoring to mount the frightened horses that were now in the line of fire.

The lieutenant overtook a squealing, cursing Mexican who had lost his rifle. Running like *Uncas*, Gaskell lifted himself from the ground and brought the butt of his revolver down upon the outlaw's head. Another bandit turned as he heard the groan of his friend, but the other end of the lieutenant's weapon accounted for him before he could fire.

"Get 'em!" screamed Gaskell. "Tumble 'em out of their saddles, boys!"

And the "boys" needed little encouragement in their work. The shouts of "*Viva Lopez!*" had died away, and only frightened yells came from the fugitives who were endeavoring to get out of reach of the angry soldiers. The bandits had stirred up a hornets' nest, and the hornets were after them.

Gaskell brained a big outlaw who was endeavoring to mount a piebald mustang, and swung himself into the saddle before the follower of Lopez had dropped to the ground. Sergeant Hurley and two other soldiers had also possessed themselves of mounts, and the four charged pell-mell after the fleeing bandits. The defeated outlaws were riding toward the blazing cottage, with the evident intention of joining the major section of their party, which had been sent forward to attack the town.

The lieutenant's horse was a good one. In the mad, wild rush across the sand stretch that separated the arroyo from the Ventnors' cottage Gaskell rode down three stragglers, while Hurley, galloping close behind him, accounted for two more.

The cottage was burning furiously when Lieutenant Gaskell, Sergeant Hurley, and the two soldiers galloped up to it. There were no signs of the engineer and his daughter, but the bodies of six Mexicans on the roadway proved that Ventnor's boast regarding his ability to look after himself and his child was not altogether without foundation.

Gaskell rode round the flaming cottage and shouted loudly, thinking that the engi-

neer and the girl might have fled when the place was fired. No answer came.

"Where have they got to?" asked the sergeant.

The lieutenant reined up his horse and listened. Rifle-firing was audible from the town, proving that the soldiers were still engaged with the main body of the bandits. From the direction taken by the fleeing outlaws routed at the arroyo there came an occasional yell that drifted back on the dawn breeze.

"They've been captured!" cried the lieutenant. "Come on, boys!"

At a mad gallop he rode off in pursuit of the smaller body, Hurley and the two soldiers thundering after him.

The dawn was near. A sea of pale yellow appeared in the east, and the sand-dunes loomed up darkly as the light increased. Great spikes of cactus stood up like the periscopes of submarines in the sea of sand.

Half a dozen shots came from in front, and Lieutenant Gaskell wondered as to their meaning as he spurred the piebald mustang. The face of Beatrice Ventnor was ever before him. Had Lopez captured her? Had she been carried off by the mob of cutthroats who had attacked the peaceful inhabitants of the little border town?

A white-shirted figure showed up on the sands, which now were tinged with the yellow light of the dawn. It was the figure of a man running. Gaskell, thinking it a dismounted bandit, lifted his revolver and called upon the mustang.

The runner, evidently wounded, was reeling across the track. Gaskell galloped at him, leaning over the neck of his horse, his revolver thrust forward.

"Pull up, you skunk!" he shouted. "Throw up your hands!"

The runner stopped and looked up, and Lieutenant Gaskell gave a cry of astonishment. It was Ventnor—Ventnor—hardly recognizable, his face bloody, a wound showing in his shoulder, from which the shirt had been torn.

"Great Scott!" cried the lieutenant.

"Where is your daughter, man? Where is she?"

The running engineer gripped the stirrup leather and pointed ahead with his left hand. He struggled to get his breath; then, with a cry of agony, he shouted out the information.

"They've got her!" he screamed. "They took her with them! Lopez himself dragged her from me!"

Lieutenant Gaskell reached down and gripped the mining engineer's uninjured arm.

"Put your foot in the stirrup," he ordered. "Now, up you come! We'll get her! Hold tight!"

The piebald mustang sprang forward as the spurs were driven deep, and across the border-line into Mexico rode Lieutenant Gaskell, Sergeant Hurley, Ventnor, and two grim-faced cavalymen whose bosom friends had fallen in the first exchange of shots.

## V

THE sun sprang out of the desert sands like a great coin of molten gold minted in the cavernous depths and thrust up to be cooled off by the breezes sweeping over the wastes. The desert was silent and watchful, as if resentful of the five men who had invaded it.

Lieutenant Gaskell reined the piebald mustang, now foam-covered and exhausted after his wild gallop with a double burden. Sergeant Hurley and the two troopers also drew rein beside their leader. In the mad race they had lost track of the flying bandits, and they looked anxiously around for some sign that would tell them of the kidnapers' whereabouts.

"I think we've got ahead of them," growled Gaskell.

"I'm sure we have, sir," said Hurley. "We've gone at the very devil of a clip ever since we got the news."

Ventnor, sitting behind the lieutenant, stared with haggard eyes at the sands. His face looked drawn and gray. He was a different man from the person who had given his views about the value of flags

to Sergeant Thomas Hurley on the previous afternoon.

"I think we're in front of them," he said in a curious, strained voice. "They wouldn't gallop the legs off their horses once they got over the border-line."

The lieutenant stared at a great mountain of sand which lay to the right, and which somewhat blocked their view. He shook the reins of the piebald and moved toward it.

"We'll get a better view from the top of this dune," he said. "There's a possibility that they swung to the east."

In silence the five approached the sand-hill, the piebald with his double load leading the way. The hill, at close quarters, was steeper than it appeared to be from a distance, and Lieutenant Gaskell slipped from his horse and ran up it, accompanied by one of the troopers.

The two reached the top and stood for a moment looking toward the east. Then the lieutenant gave a quick, sharp cry, dropped to his knees, and rolled down the slope. The trooper endeavored to follow his officer's example, but he was too slow. The brisk rattle of rifle-fire came from the far side, and the soldier pitched forward and lay still, the sunbeams glinting upon the rifle which he held in the clutch of death.

"Quick!" cried the lieutenant, beckoning to Ventnor and Hurley. "They're rushing the hill! Leave the horses with Brown—hurry!"

It was a mad, wild ten minutes that followed. There were three men against fifteen, and one of the three, made insane by the sight of his daughter in the middle of the attacking band, lacked much of the cool resource that was necessary at that moment. Twice Ventnor sprang from behind cover to charge down the farther slope, with the intention of rescuing the girl from the hands of the outlaws; twice Gaskell dragged him back again and cursed his stupidity.

"You're mad!" cried the lieutenant. "Keep under cover, if you want to live any longer! You wouldn't have one

chance in a hundred of reaching the bottom of the slope."

And Ventnor, whispering the name of the daughter he loved, allowed himself to be dragged behind the sand-bank, where, crouching low, he used the dead trooper's rifle on the outlaws. Not knowing how many enemies blocked their path, the bandits had taken whatever shelter they could after being driven back in the first charge. Two of their number lay upon the ground, black, ugly spots in the dazzling brilliance of the morning sunshine.

"How long can we hold 'em?" whispered Sergeant Hurley.

"I don't know," growled the lieutenant. "They won't break cover for a while, because they don't know yet how many of us are here."

"When they find out, they'll rush us," said Hurley.

"I suppose they will, but the yellow streak in that bunch will keep them from rushing us for some time!"

There was a little silence, broken only by the muttered curses of the engineer. Then the lieutenant spoke.

"Hurley!" he whispered.

"Yes, sir," answered the sergeant.

"Do you think you could get back to the captain?"

"I think so, sir."

"Well, that's our only hope. If we let these devils get away from us, we'll lose them altogether; but if you could bring up the troop before they get their courage back, why, we'll eat 'em up!"

"I'll do it," said Hurley. "Will I go now, sir?"

"Yes," said the lieutenant. "Circle wide to the right, and go like the mischief when you break cover. Good luck to you, Tom!"

Lieutenant Gaskell put out his hand. The sergeant gripped it, then turned and moved on hands and knees toward the horses.

The mining engineer glanced at the man he had fought twelve hours before, then sprang to his feet and rushed after him, his right hand extended.



"I'm sorry!" he said. "You—you—were right! And you'll bring help, won't you?"

"I'll try," said Sergeant Hurley simply, returning the hand-clasp, and without another word he crept toward the horses.

Lieutenant Gaskell and Ventnor watched Hurley make his dash from cover. Cautiously the sergeant led his mount to a point where further efforts at concealment were futile; then he mounted, drove spurs into his steed, and dashed off across the bare sand.

One of the outlaws immediately broke cover and started in pursuit, but Lieutenant Gaskell quelled the pursuer's ardor with a bullet which brought him to the ground, leaving his riderless horse to gallop after the cavalryman who was riding for help. Another Mexican followed the example of the first, but a bullet from Ventnor's rifle brought down the horse, and the bandit lay stunned beside his mount.

"Eleven of them left!" said the lieutenant. "If we can hold them for a couple of hours, we'll get help."

"We'll hold them," growled the engineer. "Say, be—be careful if you take a pop at that sand-heap to the right, won't you?"

"I saw," said Gaskell quietly. After a pause he continued: "Don't get fretted. We'll get her back!"

The sergeant's departure stirred the outlaws, who evidently realized the nature of the soldier's mission. From each place of concealment came shouts of anger and signal calls. Lieutenant Gaskell turned and beckoned to the trooper who stood with the horses.

"Tie 'em together and come here, Brown," he said. "They're going to rush us, and we've got to hold 'em!"

The lieutenant was right. Ten of the bandits broke from cover together, one of their number remaining behind with Beatrice Ventnor. They came forward at a run. Gaskell spoke quietly to his two companions.

"Make every shot tell," he said. "We've got very little ammunition!"

It was a stiff, hot fight. The lieutenant's caution made Ventnor and Brown hold their fire till the bandits were close to the slope; then they blazed away. A hulking giant, running in the lead of his companions, went down as the engineer fired his first shot, while Brown winged a ratlike fellow who was making an attempt to get behind the dune which the three were holding.

Gaskell put a bullet in the knee of a third, whose wild screams of pain had a curious effect upon his companions. They turned and fled back to cover, and Trooper Brown, in his excitement, jumped to his feet with the intention of pursuing. The lone outlaw left to guard Beatrice Ventnor got his opportunity then. He fired from his place of concealment, and Brown fell backward with a bullet in his chest.

"Fight 'em!" he gurgled, as the lieutenant bent over him. "Give it to 'em! They—they—they—" He choked, remained quiet for a moment, his eyes fixed upon the face of Gaskell, then, in a curious, soft whisper he murmured:

"Don't be afraid. I—I see the flag coming!"

In another moment the soldier was dead.

## VI

LIEUTENANT GASKELL and the engineer glanced at each other. The lieutenant's eyes were slightly moist; Ventnor's were hard, but the muscles of his face worked strangely.

"He was a good lad," said the lieutenant quietly. Then, in a businesslike voice, he growled: "We've only five cartridges left!"

The two, stretched on their stomachs, lay and watched the points where the outlaws lay concealed. A hush came over the place after the echoes of the last shot had died away. The sun climbed higher; the little biting lances of flame licked the hands and faces of the lieutenant and his companion, and brought spurts of fire from the belt-buckles of the two dead troopers.



For a long time neither man spoke. They lay watching with unblinking eyes, but the thoughts of both were following Sergeant Hurley. Presently Ventnor broke the silence. "What did he say?" he asked, nodding toward the body of Brown.

"He said, 'I see the flag coming!'"

"What do you make of that?"

"I don't know. I believe he's right, though. Hurley will bring help."

There was another long silence, broken by three or four shots from the bandits. Suddenly the lieutenant raised his rifle and fired at a horseman who dashed from cover and rode at a gallop out of range.

"What is that fellow going to do?" asked Ventnor.

"Going to flank us," answered the lieutenant. "They're going to make another try, and I'm afraid they'll get us. There goes another!"

Another horseman followed the first; then the two wheeled, and at a safe distance came behind the dune, where the pitiful weakness of the opposing force was made plain to them.

"I'm afraid they'll tramp on us this time!" said the lieutenant. With a half smile upon his face he thrust his hand into the inside of his jacket and brought out a small silk American flag, which he fixed to the barrel of Brown's rifle. "I always thought of a happening like this," he explained, as Ventnor watched him. "You see, I'd like to die with the flag waving. Brown was right—the flag is coming! If it don't get here in time to help us, it will get here to teach these devils a lesson. They can't trample on it. To-day they might, but to-morrow they'll get theirs. Your daughter and Brown and Wilson, and you and I, will be revenged by our country!"

"It's only her I'm thinking of," said Ventnor.

"I know that," growled the lieutenant, "but our boys will get her even if you and I go out. Here they come, old man! We've only two cartridges each, so we mustn't miss!"

The outlaws approached in a circle, and the lieutenant cursed softly as their bullets flung up little spurts of sand about the hiding-place of the two. The attackers began to yell, as if to give themselves courage; then, at a signal, they came forward on the run.

Up the front of the slope came four, while three others circled and attacked from the rear. Gaskell fired, and the leader of the front detachment went down in a heap. Ventnor fired at the leader of the rear division, who stood for a moment as if suddenly paralyzed, then slipped softly down on the hot sand.

The lieutenant tried to shift his position, and received a bullet in the shoulder as he turned. Another ball took the lobe from Ventnor's left ear as he lifted his head to get a better aim for his last shot. He aimed at the man who had winged him, and chuckled grimly as the shot went true.

The outlaws were on them now. Gaskell fired at a vicious-looking scoundrel who ran with a curious, bearlike motion. As he fell, the lieutenant and his companion sprang to their feet and clubbed their rifles.

"At them!" roared Gaskell. "At them!"

A bullet grazed the lieutenant's forehead as he struck at a man who fired at him from a distance of six paces. As the soldier rushed, the long, sweet notes of a bugle came through the hot air of the morning. The bugle-call rose up like a lariat of silver, and after it came the thresh of horses galloping madly across the hot sand!

Lieutenant Gaskell heard, but he thought his ears were playing tricks. The blood from the wound on his forehead blinded him, but he was able to see the bandit who had shot at him. He picked himself up and rushed at his assailant, and the bandit, who had also heard the notes of the bugle, turned and fled.

Lieutenant Gaskell was gaining on the outlaw when there came the sound of a shot, and the fugitive crumpled up and lay still. The amazed lieutenant stopped,

wiped the blood from his face, and looked around. Racing toward the sand-hill on foam-flecked horses came a score of cavalymen led by Sergeant Hurley, who, standing high in his stirrups, was whooping like a madman.

"Brown was right," said Lieutenant Gaskell quietly. "He was right—he saw the flag coming!"

Then he sat down softly on the sand and lapsed into unconsciousness.

When he came to his senses, several minutes later, he found that his head was pillowed upon the lap of Beatrice Ventnor, while that young lady was bathing his brow with cold water.

"If you please, I would like my flag," said the lieutenant simply; "the little silk flag that I left over there on the top of the sand-dune."

It was Ventnor who, at his daughter's request, brought the tiny flag to the sol-

dier, and Lieutenant Gaskell, who had almost forgotten his wound, thanked the engineer cordially.

"It was a tough fight, Ventnor," added the cavalryman, "but we won!"

Ventnor looked down upon his daughter and laid his hand affectionately upon her head.

"It was the flag that won for us," he said; "our flag!"

Sergeant Thomas Hurley, standing close to the lieutenant, allowed a slight smile to show at the corners of his mouth, and Gaskell saw.

"Of course," the lieutenant said, "no one can monkey with our flag and get away with it. It's a pity you missed the last charge, Tom," he added, to Sergeant Hurley. "Ventnor and I put up this little flag on the top of the dune and dared the beggars to come and get it. Some scrap, eh?"

## THE YELLOW JAR

WHITE butterflies are creeping near  
This yellow jar where rose-leaves lie,  
Like simple nuns in gowns of fear,  
Like humor and like tragedy.

And down they steal with throbbing wing  
Across the pool of shadows, where  
That other bowl of dust is king  
With blossoms past, with tear, with prayer.

One was the rose you brought, and one  
Was you. The symbol lied—it seemed  
You were the summit of the sun;  
Now you are less than that you dreamed.

In life we loved you, and in death  
There is devotion for you, too;  
Only the witless human breath  
Is mourning for the death in you.

Yet what of you, I wonder, stands  
Without the stillness of the room,  
Beyond the reach of rising hands,  
Still smiling at this china tomb!

White butterflies are creeping past  
The jar of death, the yellow jar;  
For butterflies are not the last  
To sense things are not as they are!

*Djuna Barnes*

# THE HIGH COST OF GOVERNMENT



by

Judson C.  
Welliver

**W**HAT do you suppose it is costing you, Mr. Average Citizen, to pay your share of the total expense of government in these United States?

If you are the head of a household of five persons, your annual bill, which you must pay in one shape or another, amounts to at least one hundred and seventy-five dollars. In other words, the cost *per capita* is about thirty-five dollars, or probably something more than that.

So long ago as 1913 the Census Bureau calculated that the cost of national, State, county, and city governments in the United States aggregated \$2,966,970,493. Estimating the population of the country at 97,086,378, it found that each individual was paying \$30.56 a year.

This, moreover, did not include all the governmental costs. Incorporated towns with less than twenty-five hundred inhabitants were not included. Some other civil districts, as townships, road, drainage, irrigation, and levee districts, and school districts in small towns, were also omitted from the reckoning. So, even at that time, the figure of \$30.56 *per capita* was admittedly too low.

Forty years ago it was costing just about three hundred millions a year to run the Federal government. The appropriations recently made, for the fiscal year now current, will aggregate about \$1,630,000,000, or almost five and one-half times as much.

Last year the appropriations for the national government were \$1,114,000,000. It is a little dizzying to think that the increase from that figure to \$1,630,000,000—the increase in a single year—is almost twice the total cost of running the national establishment in 1877.

The post-office appropriation bill alone, as passed this year, calls for more expenditure than the entire cost of the national government in 1878.

The navy appropriation bill of this year will also call for more money than the entire national expenses in 1878. In fact, this year's naval bill will demand almost as much as the entire government expenses as late as 1885.

The government's total appropriations in 1885 were \$318,000,000. This year's appropriation for the navy has piled up a total of \$316,000,000 to the time of writing. It is still in the Senate com-

mittee, and quite possibly, when it becomes law, it will be still larger.

When all the world goes to war, or sets about preparing itself for the possibility of war, the bills pile up at an astounding rate. Last year our appropriation for the army was \$101,974,000; this year the same bill passed the House carrying over \$182,000,000, and the Senate promptly set about inflating it still further.

Figures are notoriously uninteresting to the average reader. But these are figures of what you and I are going to pay for the preparedness we all want and believe in; for maintaining and insuring the security of the government.

Last year the total of the army, fortifications, and Military Academy appropriation bills was \$109,104,224. This year the total of those same bills is \$208,846,241. To that, for good measure, Congress added twenty millions to build a nitrate plant, which is really an additional measure of military preparedness. Total for this year, \$228,846,241, against \$109,104,224 last year. And at that the bills for this year were still incomplete and likely to be a good deal increased.

One more comparison. Last year the total of appropriations dealing with army, navy, fortifications, Military Academy, and preparedness was \$258,766,088. This year the total of these measures, to the time of writing, is just about \$525,000,000, and likely to be still larger.

There is one great appropriation bill that is less this year than last—the pension measure. Last year it carried \$164,100,000; this year, \$158,065,000.

But it would be unfair to the present era of liberal expenditure to omit mention of the contracts authorized by this year's laws, to be paid for in future. In addition to actual appropriations of about \$1,630,000,000, there are authorizations to enter into contracts aggregating, from figures now at hand, \$257,741,950. These contracts will in large part be paid in

future years; but they enter into the total of expenditures authorized this year.

Adding them in with the actual appropriations, the aggregate expenditure to the credit of the current session of Congress foots up almost \$1,900,000,000. By the time Congress makes the last additions, the total for the present year of grace may quite possibly round out the two-billion figure

#### OUR "BILLION-DOLLAR COUNTRY"

Twenty-five years ago a "Reed Congress" appropriated a grand total of \$1,023,000,000. That represented two years' work, not one—a little more than half a billion a year. The party in opposition raised a loud outcry about such rank, outrageous extravagance. Speaker Reed, on the other hand, stoutly defended his Congress, declaring that he was proud of its record. This was a "billion-dollar country," he said, and he was glad to belong to a party that could recognize the fact.

He was right about it, too; for there was never any material reduction of expenses after that time. Instead, they have increased almost constantly. Mr. Reed's billion-dollar country is practically, to-day, a four-billion-dollar country.

What is the prospect that these tremendous governmental costs can be pruned down again, after the preparedness work has been accomplished, and when the world gets back to a peace basis instead of a war scale in government charges? Experience shows, not only with this country but with others, that expenses once jacked up to a new high level are seldom much reduced.

We look back to the Spanish War as a pretty modest little complexity in our foreign relations; but in the biennium in which it took place, government expenses leaped from \$954,000,000 to \$1,553,000,000—an increase of more than sixty-three per cent.

Almost everybody assumed that that immense increase was a temporary affair, and that after the war there would be a

return to something like the old scale of cost. Nothing of the kind! The country had got keyed up to a new basis, and it stuck. Here are the biennial appropriations for a series of years before, including, and after the Spanish-War period. They show that the big increase at the war epoch proved practically permanent:

YEARS	APPROPRIATIONS
1895-1896.....	\$917,013,000
1897-1898.....	954,496,000
1899-1900.....	1,553,349,000
1901-1902.....	1,476,886,000
1903-1904.....	1,533,212,000
1905-1906.....	1,497,741,000
1907-1908.....	1,789,404,000
1909-1910.....	2,014,758,000
1911-1912.....	1,956,125,000
1913-1914.....	2,020,666,000
1915-1916.....	2,231,055,000

These figures do not hold much promise for a paring down of government expenses when the world gets over its war mania. Our present huge increase in spendings represents mainly provision for bigger army and navy and general preparations for defense. Very well; the bigger army and navy and appurtenant establishments will remain with us; they will have to be built still bigger, and to be maintained at increasing rates.

#### NEW ITEMS OF FEDERAL EXPENSE

The functions of government tend constantly to broaden, and the cost increases proportionately. The Federal government is this year authorizing expenditures of many millions to aid in building country roads. That step, once taken, is almost certain to lead to larger and yet larger expenses. The Administration is demanding fifty millions for investment in a mercantile marine. That, likewise, is a project that is easier to get into than to get out of. And so on.

Probably all governmental expenditures represent a certain measure of reckless, unbusinesslike management. Government is not business; it is not conducted so nearly on business lines as it ought to be. There is waste, everybody agrees; there is not high efficiency.

Several years ago the late Senator Aldrich declared that if government business were managed as it would be if the government were a private corporation, probably three hundred millions a year could be saved. At that time the annual budget was less than a billion dollars.

The happy-go-lucky fashion in which government funds are shoveled out, with comparatively little check on the manner of their expenditure, and too often with inadequate knowledge of the purposes to which they are to be devoted, inevitably leads to extravagances. There is no central authority over the business of either raising or spending money. It is nowadays the almost universal conviction that such an authority ought to be established, in the form of a budget system.

Under such a system, a great budget committee of Congress, or of the House of Representatives, would have jurisdiction over the whole realm of raising and spending money. It would receive the estimates of the government departments, consider the probable revenues, and decide in general what expenses could be authorized. Then the departments would have to cut their garments according to the cloth thus measured out to them.

At present, instead of a responsible, central, authoritative budget committee, there is a grand free-for-all rush of various committees endowed with power to make up appropriation bills. Each is reaching into the Treasury for all it can get; and the best getter esteems himself the most meritorious performer.

#### WE ONCE HAD A FEDERAL BUDGET

It is an interesting fact, which seems to have escaped most of the political wiseacres, that the so-called budget system was the rule of this government, in making appropriations and raising revenue, from the establishment of the United States down to the close of the Civil War. Throughout the first two generations of the republic, the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives dominated the business of raising money,



and also that of determining how it should be spent. It was precisely the budget system for which reformers of to-day contend.

During the Civil War, for instance, Thaddeus Stevens, of Pennsylvania, was chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means. If one marvels at the power wielded by this stern old Puritan during that stormy period, if he wonders at Stevens's ability to command concessions even from the great Lincoln, he need but consider the authority of the purse, which Stevens held.

Lincoln was, indeed, the war President, and commander-in-chief of army and navy; but he could not spend a single dollar that was not provided for him by Congress, and he had to spend every dollar as Congress directed.

They did things more logically in those days than we do them now, and so it was accepted that the committee that had to raise the revenue should, on the principle of cutting the garment according to the cloth, also decide how the money should be spent. Small wonder that the man who headed that committee, during the war, should have been a power in the nation!

It required the last stretch of the national credit to meet the needs of that mighty conflict. The government's credit was sorely smitten at the very outset, for it seemed that the nation was falling to pieces. Yet, despite all difficulties, measures were formulated that financed the war; measures that were widely accounted by statesmen and fiscal authorities—at least until the present war in Europe started—to be the most ingenious and effective that any country ever adopted for such a purpose. It has been said many times that if the financial genius of the South had been comparable to its military capacity, the war might have ended very differently.

However that may be, Thaddeus Stevens was the head of the committee in which revenue and appropriation bills originated; and during the war he found

the burden a heavy one. When the conflict ended, he saw that the raising of revenue was going to be, thenceforward, a less important task than that of spending it. He believed that there would be no more difficulty in getting the needful money; but he also believed that the national expenses must be cut down sharply and rapidly, lest bankruptcy ensue.

So Stevens was the leading spirit in the movement to separate the functions of raising and of spending the money. He believed that if one committee levied the taxes, and another disbursed the proceeds, they would check against each other, and in the end the costs of government would be reduced faster than through a single committee dominating both the raising and the spending of revenue.

There seemed, at that time, a good deal to be said in favor of Stevens's plan. Its advocates urged whatever is to be said to-day in opposition to the budget system, and the proposal carried readily enough.

Stevens became chairman of the new Committee on Appropriations. That was natural enough, considering that he was the chief champion of the new plan, on the ground that it was to be a measure of economy.

There was, as experience proved, one weak spot in this new system. When government appropriations once get hoisted to a new level, they don't come down to the old basis. All the good intentions in the world, all the promises of economy, all the assurances of instant retrenchment, avail little, and that not for long, against the tendency of government to take on new functions and increase its cost.

Economies, following the Civil War, were disappointingly small. The new system that Stevens had induced Congress to adopt was not the success that had been expected; but the country didn't particularly mind. A new era of prosperity, development, speculation, expansion in every direction, followed the war. The greater nation of the post-bel-

lum period absorbed the increased costs of government without complaining, and people forgot that there ever had been any such inexpensive and simple governmental regimen as that prior to 1761.

#### FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DIVIDED

Thus matters went along until 1880, when the House of Representatives conferred on the Committee on Commerce the authority to make up the River and Harbor Bill, with all the privileges attaching to a general appropriation bill. At the same time, the House sent to its Committee on Agriculture the estimates from the Department of Agriculture, which proceeded to prepare its own schedule of appropriations. At that time, it may be noted, the estimates for this department amounted to about half a million dollars per annum; now they reach about thirty millions.

This plan of distributing appropriation measures among the committees dealing with the legislation on various subjects worked so well that in 1886 the House made a rule which took from the Appropriation Committee the army, Military Academy, diplomatic and consular, Indian, naval, and post-office appropriation measures, and gave them to the committees having legislative jurisdiction over these subjects. This was the last step in the revolution. Let us go back to the beginning and see just what had happened.

At the start of the Federal government, a set of committees on various legislative subjects were created. They may be called "policy committees." One, for instance, dealt with the policy of the Post-Office Department. Its function was to determine where post-offices should be, to classify them, and to direct how the business should be conducted. But that committee, having made up its policy, could not appropriate a dollar with which to execute its program.

Another committee made the policy for the army; another for the navy; and so on. But in each case, after the "policy committee" had fixed upon the general

principles of its department—when it had decided how many post-offices there should be, or how many soldiers the army should embrace, or how many frigates should be authorized, and the like—after these details were decided by the policy committees, then the Ways and Means Committee took the whole set of policy measures, figured how much money they required, decided how it should be raised, reported measures to collect it, and authorized its expenditure according to the programs laid down.

Thus legislation and appropriation were kept strictly separate.

When the Appropriation Committee was created, after the Civil War, it simply amounted to a further division. The legislative committees in theory continued to make policies, the Ways and Means Committee provided the money, and the Appropriation Committee authorized its expenditure.

When the Appropriation Committee's jurisdiction was split up, and several of the legislative committees received authority to make up the budgets for their various departments, a sharp change of policy was inaugurated. In theory, the appropriation bill continued to be a mere itemized statement of the amounts to be spent, and authorization to spend. It was not the intention that general policies should be written into appropriation measures; these must come in general legislative bills.

#### EVILS OF THE APPROPRIATION "RIDER"

But in actual experience, the various committees very soon began to write legislation into appropriation bills. It was the one way to make certain that the legislation would get passed. Appropriation bills *must* pass, else the government's business could not continue. So the sure way to get a piece of legislation adopted was to insert it into an appropriation measure—in Congressional phrase, to make it a "rider."

Many years ago, for instance, the letter-postage rate was three cents. There was

a movement to get it reduced to two cents; but the opposition was always strong enough to kill the proposal so long as it stood alone. So the Committee on Post-Offices finally hitched the proposal to the appropriation bill, secured a rule making it in order, and compelled members who opposed it to vote against the whole post-office appropriation. They couldn't well do that, because it would have stopped the mails if the appropriation hadn't passed. The rider was a simple proviso in a few words:

PROVIDED, that none of the money herein appropriated shall be expended in paying for the carriage of letters at a rate of postage exceeding two cents per one-half ounce.

Some marvelous uses have been made of the appropriation rider. Thus, fourteen years after the Civil War, the Democratic party came into control of Congress, but Hayes, a Republican, was President. The Democrats wanted to repeal the more objectionable reconstruction measures, such as those allowing Federal marshals, and even soldiers, to supervise elections in the Southern States. These repeal measures could not be forced to passage; the Republicans filibustered and jockeyed them out of their chance.

The Democrats then adopted the rider plan, putting their provisos into the bills making the necessary appropriations for the army and the legislative, executive, and judicial establishments. These measures passed, because Congress didn't dare let them fail. President Hayes, however, had more nerve, and actually vetoed the appropriations, leaving the army and a great force of civil employees of the government without any provision for support.

The entire activity of a long extra session of Congress was devoted to straightening out the tangle. It was, perhaps, the most notable case in our history of Congress using its power over the purse-strings to coerce the Executive—precisely the same thing, by the way, that the English Commons used to do centuries ago, in

order to keep obstreperous kings within bounds.

Bemoan it as its critics may, the fact is that the rider, or limitation attached to appropriations, has been the historic weapon with which parliaments have fought the tyranny of kings. The quarrels between Charles I and his Commons were strikingly similar to President Hayes's feud with a Democratic Congress.

Nevertheless, legislating by riders is bad business. It results in half-baked measures, insufficiently considered. Several of the worst scandals in American history have been made possible through riders, whose full effects were not understood when they were inserted.

There are some kinds of policy legislation that ought to be permitted as riders on appropriation measures. Thus, years ago, United States marshals and judges received fees, and fattened on them. The condition was scandalous, but general legislation to correct it could not be passed; too much "pull" opposed it. Finally a rider to an appropriation bill killed the whole fee system, and the cost of running the Federal courts at once dropped about one-third, while their efficiency was improved.

#### TWO SIDES OF THE BUDGET QUESTION

That was a case in which a rider accomplished a thoroughly desirable purpose that otherwise would have failed. But no legislative wisdom has been able to devise a rule fixing those classes of cases in which riders may properly be used, and those in which they should be excluded. So Congress goes on legislating by the rider process, and frankly admitting that it's all wrong.

Nobody is more frank about criticising the present haphazard way of managing government finances than the men who have had experience doing it. From the Civil War down to date, the chairmen of the House committees in which revenue bills originate have been men of first-class ability and high character. They have regretted the weaknesses of the system un-

der which they worked, and very generally have recommended the budget system.

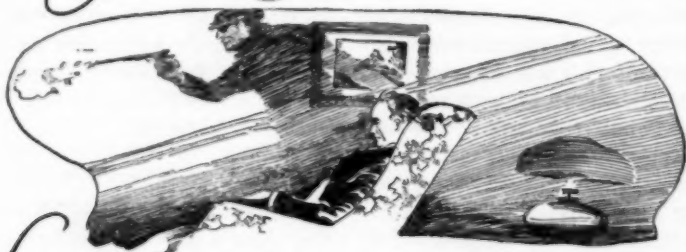
On the other side is the fact that the houses of Congress do not fancy reposing such a tremendous power with a single committee. There are two sides to the question, not always recognized by people who are very certain that everything is wrong with the present methods.

But one thing may be set down as very sure—the costs of government cannot go on forever rising as they have done in the past generation. The people may be amiable enough about it now, when times are

good and prosperity the rule; but they will think more seriously when the squeeze comes, and everything except government expenses suddenly goes down.

Every year sees government assuming new functions, rendering new services to the community. Every year increases the number of its points of contact with the whole body of the people. It persists in doing more and more things for the public. It will have to begin doing them at more moderate, reasonable, businesslike expense, or else the total cost will become unbearable.

# The Double Life of Judge Nevers



by Ethel Watts Mumford

WHEN Dr. Feltner introduced me to the gray-faced, weary-eyed man in Suite B, I felt an instant liking for him. The extreme intelligence of his high forehead, the excellent balance indicated by his well-formed cranium, the refinement of his long, nervous hands, all appealed to me, the more because I had just left a case of a very different sort—an overfed, underbred woman of immature mind and no heart, suffering from cirrhosis of the liver.

My new patient smiled wanly.

"Miss Laurie," he said, and his voice had a wonderfully sympathetic quality, "I'm sorry to inflict myself on you. I'm an old bore!"

"I want Judge Nevers to learn to sleep," Dr. Feltner interrupted. "You're to be a bromid, please remember, Miss Laurie. Miss Leland will put him to bed now, and if you'll come with me, I'll give you a few instructions about the diet and baths."

I followed him down the cool semitwilight of the corridor until we stood in



the private office of the sanatorium, where Dr. Feltner scribbled busily on prescription-pads and talked.

"Nevers is a personal friend of mine," he said, jerking a strip from the pad and spearing it on a file. "He's in a highly nervous state—insomnia, headaches, lassitude, hallucinations. He has overworked himself systematically for half a century. In short, he's earned his general condition; but he's suffering from shock, and *that*, at least, is not his fault. A burglar entered his house about two weeks ago, and was in the judge's room, apparently intent on murder, when Wallace, the judge's man servant, felled the brute from behind with a blow from a poker, breaking his neck at the second vertebra. The judge awakened with a violent start and fainted. After that he had a hysterical attack, followed by nervous collapse. He has pulled through, but he's terribly shaken. I wanted him removed from all previous environment for a time, and that is why he's here. Now he must have rest and upbuilding and constant care, if we are to keep a mighty useful citizen a useful citizen still, Miss Laurie."

"I'll do my best. I like him. Not that I wouldn't, anyway, but—you understand."

The doctor grinned at me genially. He knew what I had suffered from his gluttonous millionairess.

"Mrs. Presby wasn't congenial, hey? Well, the judge is worth making over, which is more than I can say for her. Now, you are to bore him to sleep, if it's humanly possible. If it isn't, why, we'll have to resort to the pharmacy—but sleep he must. If he has any wild notions, humor him. The brain is a very delicate engine, and when you work it overtime continuously—"

An automobile made a sudden loud explosion in the street.

"Er—exactly," said the doctor, and, rising, handed me a little sheaf of prescriptions and orders, and bowed me out of the office.

I retraced my steps to the judge's room, and found that Miss Leland had just finished sorting and settling the contents of his suit-case. He smiled at me as I entered. Miss Leland closed the drawers of the chiffonier and left us. I threatened the judge with my clinical thermometer, set his chart on the night-table, and took possession. In ten minutes we were friends.

## II

Two days elapsed in which he made little progress, and the sleep he so bitterly needed could only be induced by the drugs Dr. Feltner was anxious to avoid. I knew, of course, being both woman and nurse, that something, and some very definite thing, was on my patient's mind; but I forbore to question.

I sensed the coming of his confidence, and I waited the uprush of the tides of his being, which now ebbed so low. It would demand the exercise of will before he would be able to talk freely. His was not the sort of nature that slops over for relief. He was an old man, and evidently a reticent one.

I was sitting by his bedside in the twilight, playing a game of solitaire and waiting for him to wake from the stupor in which I thought he lay, when he called me softly. I pushed the board from me and crossed to his side.

"I've decided to ask your help," he said slowly. His voice was clear and sane, showing no trace of the opiate I had given him. "Will you promise to keep what I say to yourself? Will you promise, whether you do as I ask or not, that you'll say nothing to the doctor or to any one else?"

"I promise," I answered, giving him my hand in trust.

He was silent for a moment, as if debating how best to word his desire.

"Do you know of a decent, worthwhile family who would adopt a child—a girl of seven?"

I don't know what form I had expected his request to take, but it was cer-



tainly not this. Thoughts rushed across my mind—suspicions—unjust, perhaps, but we nurses learn so much of frail human nature! His keen eyes read me through.

"No, Miss Laurie, she's—nothing to me by ties of blood. I have never even seen her in the flesh. It's—another sort of obligation."

I could only gulp an answer. I would inquire, I told him. I was quite sure I could find a respectable, responsible couple.

"Will you make it your business to do so immediately?" The judge's tone was eager. "I could rest better—I could even sleep, I think, if I felt sure that she was safe."

"Safe?" I repeated stupidly.

His gray eyes lit with sudden energy.

"Yes, safe. Will you take thirty dollars from my wallet in the top drawer, and send the money to the address I give you?"

I could at least do this with a clear conscience, so I nodded as I picked up a pencil and writing-pad.

"To whom?" I asked.

"Make it a post-office order," he said.

"Payable to Mrs. James McKorie, Gates Falls, Connecticut. Sign the order 'L. J. Gotlon.'"

I wrote down the directions.

"Tell me about this child," I asked.

"Is she attractive and of good parentage? Is she bright?"

Judge Nevers turned his head away, and his answer had a curious, difficult ring, as if he mentally summoned a fading vision.

"She's small and blond—yes, I should say she must be pretty. Her mother was an Irish woman—she is dead." He paused, and his breath caught painfully. "No, she's *not* of good parentage. Her father was a criminal; but he cared very deeply for his child. The mother was all right. The father was anxious to have the child brought up away from his life; so he kept her at this farm, paid her board regularly—"

"I see!" I said, pleased with my intuitions. "It's the child of some prisoner whom you had to sentence, and you want to be sure she's safe." I pressed his poor, fleshless fingers softly. "It's just the kind thing I would have expected of you," I said, "and I'll see that the money goes at once. What's more, I'll look about for the right sort of a home for her."

He sighed his relief, and his hand closed convulsively on mine.

"I want to get her away from there quickly," he urged. "There are others who know of her. They may have found out where she is—his gang, I mean. She—she must not fall into their hands. Even if they wished to help her, it—wouldn't do. He meant her to have her chance, and—she *shall* have it! Nobody else knows how he felt about that child, but I know."

I wondered then at the intimate relation between the judge and this mysterious outlaw, but I read the appeal in his eyes.

"You want me to send this now, don't you?" I said, rising. "I'll go at once. There's a post-office only a few blocks away. If you want anything, please flash your call light. Miss Oliphant is on corridor duty."

"Thank you," he said. "I shall be very grateful."

I hurried out on my errand, feeling sure that its accomplishment would be the turning-point of my patient's recovery. With real gladness I returned to report the money on its way. On entering the room I stopped short. He was asleep.

### III

On the following day, when I went for my walk, I hurried straight to a friend of mine—a dear woman whom I had nursed, and who has conceived a ridiculously grateful fondness for me. Their great house and its lavish luxury are always mine when I choose, and her open heart is mine, too, and her woman-of-the-

world experience, all to command. I did not mention Judge Nevers; I told her the story, saying that I had heard it from a prominent lawyer.

"I'll take the child myself," said the lady promptly. "I'll keep her until we find the right home for her. I quite understand your patient's feeling. Undoubtedly her father's associates *will* feel it their duty to look after her—God save the mark! My dear Margot, bring her right here."

When I told Judge Nevers what I had done, his eyes shone.

"That is excellent, excellent!" he exclaimed. "My dear Miss Laurie, you must kidnap that child at once!"

"Kidnap!" I cried. "Kidnap!"

"Surely," said the judge. "How else can we be sure of her future? Of course, she must be kidnaped, and leave no trace."

"And am I to kidnap her?" I inquired wildly.

"Who else?" he came back at me. "Sit down and write," he ordered, before I could utter a refusal. "Send another money-order for a hundred dollars, enclosed with this letter, which you will please have typewritten. It is to Mrs. James McKorie, at the address I gave you."

I wrote to his dictation:

Mary is to sail for Ireland, to her grandparents. Enclosed please find one hundred dollars, payable to your order—with thanks for your services. Have Mary ready on Wednesday afternoon. She will be called for by the lady who is to take charge of her.

I signed the letter "L. J. Gotlon," as he told me to do.

On the Wednesday following I obtained a day off. At the little hill town of Gates Falls I hired a local jitney and was driven out to the farm. A middle-aged woman, of acid aspect and weary manners, handed over the child to me without so much as asking for a receipt. Behold, I had kidnaped Mary!

She was an engaging little thing, frankly glad of any change that was to take

her away from Mrs. McKorie. She asked perfunctorily for her father, whom, it transpired, she had not seen for so long that her recollection of him was but a blur. When she saw the regal mansion to which I conducted her, she clapped her hands in delight. When she entered its stately portals, she wanted to kiss the footman; and when she beheld the *château-laine* of all these wonders, they promptly fell in love with each other. So ended my first legal crime in general approval and happiness all around.

Judge Nevers mended rapidly. It seemed no time at all before he was well, stronger than ever, clear-brained, firm-handed, upstanding, and outstriding all his years.

But our friendship did not end with convalescence, as so often happens. His affection for me was a fatherly tenderness, coupled always with a feeling of dependence, carried over from the weeks of his illness. He lived three crowded, happy, useful years, and I was with him when he died. He wanted no one else beside him, and, though it broke my heart, I stayed to the end.

And now I come to his legacy.

The little diary was wrapped securely and sealed with the big signet-ring I knew so well. The story it told was such a strange one that I can best give it in the judge's own words.

It seems to me that an experience so extraordinary should be recorded. Some scientist may delve more deeply into the all-important study of the wireless of the mind, and may find the key to its unsolved mystery. I feel that I am doing what is right when I give it to the light.

#### IV

##### [The Diary of Judge Nevers]

TO MY DEVOTED NURSE AND GENTLE, SYMPATHETIC FRIEND:

Were you other than you are, were you not so humanly experienced, had you not been the recipient of so many desperate confessions, the understanding

observer of so many tragic hours of life, I could not write this. I do not want any one to think of me as a man of unbalanced mind. I know that *you* will know that whatever the explanation of my strange double life may be, that life is a positive fact.

It began one afternoon in the spring of 1909, on the 18th of May. Being very tired, I lay down on the divan in the library and presently fell asleep—or, rather, fell awake. I became dimly aware of hospital odors, of the presence of a nurse, a long ward full of cots, screens, and dim, greenish light. I saw a surgeon in white, an orderly wheeling an iron stretcher. I was conscious of a curious sensation in my head and many bandages. I heard the surgeon speaking to the nurse.

"Pretty tough customer, Miss Hyatt! Call the orderly at the first move he makes. I don't mind telling you, he's got a police record."

A period of blank followed, then nausea and distracting pain. Through it I began to wonder how I got there. I remembered lying down on the divan in the library, hoping to snatch a nap. What could have so desperately injured me? I could find no answer, and it seemed eons before I could articulate:

"How did I come here?"

"Hush!" said the nurse.

I insisted on an answer. She pressed a button by the head of my cot, and the orderly came.

"You may have to strap him," she said, and walked away.

"How did I get here?" I asked again. My voice was hoarse and strange.

"Got nicked on the dome in a scrap," said the orderly. "Now, shut up, that'll be about all from you."

"Scrap?" I repeated, and then began my realization of duality.

I knew I was Judge Helbron Nevers, who had fallen asleep in the library of his house on Madison Avenue, and yet I began dimly to recall a slamming saloon-door, a volley of oaths, blows, dark fig-

ures struggling, the flash of a knife, and a staggering crash that seemed to split my head. I even gropingly recalled who had dealt me that villainous stroke—Ike the Broker—and from the bottom of a pit-black soul I was determined to be even with him.

But what had this vision of sudden death to do with me, Judge Nevers? While I lay wondering, my body—or, rather, the body I then inhabited—began to thrash and curse.

The doctor came with a hypodermic syringe. While they held me, he gave me a swift jab that presently sent me floating off into oceans of brooding tranquillity—and I stirred and woke, to find myself lying on my red-leather divan, facing my open fireplace, with old Bingo whining dolefully and clawing at me from the hearth-rug. I woke up, yes—and I thought I had dreamed a singularly vivid dream.

I had to attend a banquet that night. I got through it somehow, but my mind was elsewhere, dwelling with prophetic apprehension on the details of that dream. Home once more, and to bed, to sleep, and then—I was back in the hospital ward, with pain and helpless fury racking me with memories of places and people, foul dens and fouler men and women, crowding my consciousness, demanding recognition.

When I woke again as Judge Nevers, it was daylight in my bedroom, and Wallace was drawing back the curtains. I heard the water running for my bath, and Bingo's whine as he scratched at the door.

That was the beginning.

You know the familiar experiment in hypnosis. I refer to the transference of the subject's consciousness to that of another person, or even an object, such as a glass of water, so that the patient cries out if the proxy is hurt, or if a pin is thrust into the liquid. I have seen this experiment succeed even when the subject and he who represented the area of his consciousness were in separate rooms. It is a common phenomenon of the hyp-

notic state, yet I cannot affirm that such was exactly my case.

There certainly was no conscious hypnotism; although when I beheld the face of Joe Mensch—or "Butch" Mensch, as he was commonly called—in the shaving-mirror of his Pell Street room, it was with a convulsion of recognition. I remembered those features, that pale-skinned, livid face with its hanging jowls, and the beady eyes that looked out from under lashless lids and colorless eyebrows. Three times had Mensch appeared before me—twice as the substantiator of more than questionable alibis; once on a charge of burglary, from which he was released for lack of evidence.

Each time his presence in the courtroom had made my flesh creep. There was fascination in his loathsomeness, the evil fascination of the coiled cobra. When I beheld his face in the mirror, my mind recoiled as at the outrage of a physical blow; but I could not turn away the eyes of my mind. I stared through those lashless lids at that hideous reflection, and remembered his face before me in the courtroom.

Now, whenever I slept, I lived his life. I could in no way control him, his bestial passions, his hideous cruelties, his cold-blooded callousness. Yet I shared it all—revolted, protesting—still I shared it. And, strangest of all, I knew that the brute was unconscious of my intrusion in his mind, or, if a vague disquiet troubled him, he attributed it to the aftermath of his knockout.

You, my dear girl, will realize something, I know, of the mental agony I have suffered. Can I give you any picture of the vivid reality of my other life? Let me try to tell you of that first night when, released from the hospital, I lay in the Pell Street room to which his friends—Leather, Doyle, and Two-Finger Boff—conveyed Butch Mensch, reeling with weakness and cursing vengefully.

They laid me out on my bed, which Nellie the Pig had thoughtfully made up against my coming. Slowly the room

filled with the yeggs and gunmen who were my friends and associates. They plied me with whisky, which, in my weakened state, took hold and threw me into a frenzy—a frenzy in which I denounced Ike the Broker and swore to have his heart out.

"Aw, cut it!" Leather grinned. "Some guy got him long ago."

He threw a Columbian half-dollar on the bed. It was crusted with blood, and the edge was nipped where a bullet had clipped it. It was Ike the Broker's lucky piece!

I flew into an ecstasy of rage, demanding who had dared to mix in my affairs and rob me of my own personal and private revenge. I tried to brain Leather with the whisky-bottle, which I dropped, and fell to crying maudlin tears. After which I went suddenly to sleep, the bloody token clutched in my hand, like a child with a cherished toy—to awaken instantly as myself in my room in my own house, with my heart racing, the perspiration pouring from my body, my whole spirit in revolt.

Oh, the days when I questioned myself, dreading to acknowledge insanity! For weeks I lived in fear; then fear became hope—hope that I *was* mad. Rather than this ghastly transference!

Then I proved to myself beyond peradventure that the impossible was true. It was a simple matter to locate the hospital, to find out that Butch Mensch had been treated in the accident ward, having been brought in after a street fight in which he had been unmercifully beaten up and blackjacked. I even made excuse to visit the ward in search of a mythical missing servant, and there faced the nurses, the doctors, the orderlies whom I already knew so well.

It was easy, too, in my judicial capacity, to trace the career of my mind-mate. His police record was accessible, his present activities were no closed book to the authorities. Oh, there was no possible doubt that the duality of my life was no



delusion. By some process as yet unguessed, my consciousness, released by sleep, fled straight to that mysterious wireless station which called it to its secondary consciousness.

I have contemplated suicide—not once, dear friend, but many times. I have been sorely tempted. With the memory of horrors branded hot upon my mind and heart, I would awaken to my old life hardly able to take up my task of living. I could not but feel a partnership, a hideous complicity, in the unspeakable degradation of Mensch the Butcher.

Into what depths have I not descended, into what infamy! My boon companions, elbow to elbow, jowl to filthy jowl, have been the scourings of hell's kitchen. I have heard my voice plan crimes that would shame the fiends in hell. I have heard my laugh when a woman begged for mercy and shrieked in agony. I have seen my hands red with blood. I have seen these same hands place the bombs that sent a crowded tenement crashing in smoking ruins, and felt the thrill of satisfaction in that murderous mind in which I shared.

These were my nights, this my sleep, my rest. I grew to fear the night, I dreaded sleep. I fought against it until nature, exhausted, cast me into the unconsciousness that meant a return to my other life.

The daylight saw me sitting in judgment, enforcing the law. My nights saw me break that law and defy justice. In one hand I held the scourge, in the other the knife of the outlaw. And yet my physical organism woke refreshed from its intervals. Undoubtedly my body slept and recuperated.

Oh, what terrible insight my tormented sleep brought me! The court-room became to me a place of retribution. There I condemned and allotted penalties. My legal gown became the robe of the executioner. Then, slowly, there came a change in my revolt against the Butcher's reeking life. I found my imprisoned self watching, studying, devising ways of con-

trol, seeking the wise answer to a thousand riddles of criminal impulse. My trained mind rallied to the opportunity of being at once a lawgiver and a lawbreaker—the hound and the quarry, the slayer and the avenger. I sought to unfold the strange kinks in the criminal brain at my disposal; I strove to unravel its secret recesses, analyze its motives, its reactions.

It was then, in this second stage of my transferred consciousness, that I came upon the secret of Mary's existence—Mary, my dear friend, whom you kidnapped to safety and life. So secret a thing was she in the heart and mind of the unthinkable villain who was her father that she was, as it were, buried in a recess of his mind. He feared, he feared for her; he feared that the gang might learn of her whereabouts, might use her as a hostage for his actions; might some day strike at him through her.

Then it was that I learned the reason of the money, the blood-covered, tainted money, which Butch did not squander, which went to that address in Connecticut, under another name. At first when I, as part of him, saw the post-office orders go out under the Gotlon *alias*, I was aware only of perturbation in his mind, of a sudden feeling of vulnerability—the defenseless heel of Achilles.

How remote that classical simile from the comprehension of the thug! And yet I remember my mind applying it at that very juncture, and wondering what the concealed thing might be that Mensch apparently feared.

At last his memory yielded up the image to the searching fingers of my mind. A yellow-haired baby, and, beyond that—nebulous, crossed, as it were, by a thousand smears—a glimpse of an Irish woman's blue, black-lashed eyes; a faint haunting of something uncomfortably good—the baby's mother. There, in a tenaciously concealed corner of that predatory brain, was the one decent thought, the one unsoiled impulse, the one dream of hope, the one desire for better-



ment, the one blind, struggling realization that that which he lived and was—was evil.

In the monstrous life of my enforced companionship, how often have I turned to that secret chamber for something that I might share without loathing! Do you wonder now, my dear, that with the first effort of my waking will after my utter collapse, I sought to bring that child to a safe haven? I would have taken her myself, but to me she would inevitably have been traced.

Meanwhile, as Judge Nevers, I continued to sit in judgment. I knew that my precise and accurate knowledge of the federation of crime was to some purpose. Criminals grew to fear my very name. I was supposed by them to be endowed with superhuman clairvoyance.

Over and over again I named hidden crimes, broke down well-built alibis, and from sheer superstitious fright forced confessions that shook the foundations of the underworld. The shyster lawyers of the criminal courts would fight with tooth and claw to keep a client from coming before me. The societies that prosecute vice and crime worked just as hard to bring their cases on my calendar.

Dear God, how have I striven to be fair! I have struggled to do justice. I have given clemency in the face of popular disapproval, because I believed that in clemency lay some measure of hope. I have dealt severely where severity appeared to be judicial tyranny, the petty animosity of a judge with indigestion "taking it out" on a helpless felon. But I have *known*—and the underworld was not deceived.

One night, when sleep cast me into the seething filth of Butch Mensch's life, the episode began that was to end in my escape. We were sitting in the back room of Manny Sullivan's "dump" on First Avenue—Butch, Leather, Sammy Klein, Rand, and Two-Finger. Leather was setting up the drinks. Sammy Klein had a plan to rob a promising country house, and wanted help. He was just on the

point of making his proposition when Manny himself came back from the bar, leaned over my shoulder, and spoke hurriedly:

"Red Daily's pinched, and Megan says you blew on him. You let that hobo draw you, and he was a stool-pigeon. You'll drop for that! Better get while the getting is good!"

Butch got up. His mind was seething with Leather's hospitality and his own perturbation. He cursed Red thoroughly and stumbled out.

Then I remembered my suspicions of the strange tramp who had ingratiatingly won Butch's confidence not a fortnight before. I could see Butch's memories showing him his folly, and he cursed himself as freely as he had cursed Red; but he was too befuddled to realize his danger, should the charge of a loose tongue be proved against him.

He sought the Pell Street kennel where he slept when he was not recklessly gambling and spending his loot in some tawdry, electric-lighted, screaming dive, and threw himself on the cot. Dawn was breaking, the well of the narrow street was pale purple, the huddled bundles on the fire-escapes moved restlessly, and—I was back once more, Judge Nevers, in his bedroom on Madison Avenue.

That day Red Daily was arraigned before me.

You can have no conception of the pressure that can be brought to bear by the political bosses. It was brought to bear on me then in an effort to clear Daily—a "big man's" tool. I received intimidating intimations, friendly advice, assurances of future favors. Long before I reached the court-room that morning, the lines were busy. One of the most prominent lawyers in the State defended Daily—why, I knew only too well.

I knew, too, that should I hold straitly to my task and enforce the law, the pent-up hate of the underworld would receive the wordless backing of the political demagogues. They would "get" me, not alone as Judge Nevers, but also

as Butch Mensch. I welcomed the thought. Better annihilation than that which was! To threats and promises I answered nothing, but I saw to it that the prosecution should be able to prove its case; that no amount of bail should free the prisoner; that he should be held for the examination that must of necessity prove his undoing.

There was death in the air when, as court adjourned, I stepped from the bench and, with my escort, crossed the crowded room amid my enemies, who stood to salute the majesty of the law.

I spent the remaining hours of that afternoon in setting my affairs in order, and in writing the few letters I would wish delivered in case of my death—thanking the fates, the while, that I was alone in the world. For the first time in many months I lay down that night with a feeling of security and peace.

I awoke as Butch Mensch, awoke to find that all that I had foreseen had crystallized to fact! The underworld had acted quickly once it received the intimation that the men higher up had failed to influence Judge Nevers. Mensch, who had unwittingly betrayed Daily, was ordered to square accounts by "getting" the judge.

Butch did not demur. Life-and-death chances were familiar to him. He had no objection to a "job of croaking"—and, moreover, with a covert threat, Borsky, the political boss's envoy, remarked that he knew of Mary and her country refuge.

In the back room at Manny's we sat, soberly for once, and nodded quick assent to Borsky and Megan, Daily's pal, as they laid down the law and developed their plans for instant action. I heard the trio planning my murder. My sensations were those of relief until I began to fear that with my death as Judge Nevers my mind might not die, but might be transplanted wholly into Butch's consciousness.

From that moment I feared the end. I knew my other self could make no defense. In my recklessness I had even

left myself unarmed and my home unguarded. Now I learned that the police were to be called away, and an avenue of escape kept clear for the murderer. Leather himself was to attend to the simple matter of opening the area door. I was to be noiselessly blackjacked.

Nothing was to be disturbed or stolen. That my taking off was the result of my obdurate stand in Daily's case was to be made perfectly plain to those "in the know." A warning was needed to keep in hand refractory administrators of the law.

Butch was only too glad of a chance to square himself. He was ashamed of having fallen a prey to the spy's trap. Moreover, he knew that the whole fabric of local gang-power was gone should the exposures resulting from Daily's prosecution be allowed to get abroad. Grunting his consent, he dropped the sandbag Megan handed him into the lining of his torn coat and fumbled in his pocket.

"Short of snow!" he grumbled.

Megan passed him a little sheaf of cocain powders, which Butch worked into a slit in his shirt-flap, lest any of the precious crystals should be dispersed.

The clock above the bar struck the hour—one.

Leather came in, nodded, glanced at Butch with a reassuring nod, and went out again. I could feel the muscles of Butch's jaw contract.

"What does the old guy look like?" he inquired. "No use croaking the wrong one."

The irony of it! What did Judge Nevers look like—Judge Nevers, the corporeal part of that mind which knew his own more intimately than the recording angel!

"Tall, lean guy," Megan described. He knew—he had come before me in the dock. "Almost white thatch, long, lean hands, big ring on left one, regular brass knuck—but you know him, you boob; he like to got yer for crackin' the Morris crib, and when you alibied Willsie—remember?"

"Him!" said Mensch, and I felt his evil passion rise and stir. "Him! Do I know him? I got the feel of his lamps on me yet. Him!"

Butch dusted the cocain carefully on his thumb and inhaled it. At once his dull brain responded—a growing sense of power, of fearless confidence. He laughed; his normally slouching figure pulled itself together. Sheer blood-lust was upon him now.

"All right!" he said, rising. "I'll get the old devil. I'll swat him one extra on my own. Come on!"

We went out. Leather was nowhere in sight. He had gone ahead to tamper with locks and bolts. Borsky turned off quickly. The bosses did not want to be identified with the turning of this trick—that is, identified by the public and the press. Butch and Megan tramped alone in the silent, starlit night.

My mind was slowly giving way to panic. I was so utterly helpless, so unable to protect myself against the creature that bore my consciousness to witness my own killing. I frantically tore and gnawed at that alien mind—if I can use such terms for a purely mental effort—but I was powerless to control it. I was with, not of, its essence.

We came upon familiar streets at last—streets that led like the chute of a slaughter-house to the place of my death. We were on the avenue, every house was familiar, every inequality of pavement, every wink of light from the street lamps. We turned in at my own residence as calmly as if Butch owned the premises. We opened and closed the outer door, pausing a moment in the vestibule, while Butch inhaled his second dose of cocain. Again that wave of exalted ego swept through him, and with it went my last pale hope.

Can you conceive of a living man's fearful struggle to escape from under a crushing mass of a thousand tons, when the convulsive effort of his whole body is powerless to stir one single atom? In the years since I suffered, I have sought

some simile with which to convey in words the feelings of those moments. After much searching, this is the only one that conveys, even remotely, the sense of that desperate and fruitless effort.

We passed through the well-known halls noiselessly. Butch's flash showed him the way across the library. How startling was the familiar pattern of the rug as the light picked it out!

Stealthily he crossed the room and paused before the door of the bedroom. Gently the door opened—a crack, widening—widening. The flash showed the foot of the bed. Butch stopped, listening intently.

Somewhere a clock struck two. There was the sound of regular breathing from the bed, nothing more.

Now that the end was near, I prayed, prayed with all my soul, not to be spared, but that I might die utterly—die wholly as myself.

Another step forward and Butch dropped the flash into his left-hand pocket, while with his right he sought the sandbag, shifting and balancing it for a solid hold. His fingers gripped, and he took another step.

Then I saw myself clearly—a tall, white-haired old man with long, thin hands, as Megan had said. My body lay there inert, relaxed, with closed eyes and weary calm. Even in the darkness I saw clearly.

Butch's left hand advanced—he must bend my head quickly, so that the blow should catch at the base of the skull. Then—flame-streaked blackness, rending pain, and I awoke—awoke, sitting up in my bed, my arms extended rigidly, my voice ringing in an inhuman shriek—awoke to see a dark body on the floor and the tense silhouette of Wallace, my servant, bending above it.

Then I fainted, and awoke again, shaking as with ague, gasping for breath, utterly unable to control the physical manifestations of the struggle within me. In the glare of the electrics, with my servant leaning over me, with a blue-

coated officer standing at the door, I realized that Butch was dead, and that he had not taken my consciousness with him to suffer in his hell. He was dead, and I was free!

The rest, my dear friend, you know. I have you to thank for my recovery, both in health and balance. I have you to thank for the happiness of the affection that has cheered my later life. I have you to thank for the relief of writing these my experiences to one who will read and believe and understand, and who will judge whether or not others should know. To you—hail and farewell!

## V

[*Note by James Feltner, M. D.*]

MISS LAURIE having permitted me to read Judge Nevers's statement, I feel that, having been his physician, I should add my comment on the case.

The judge was known for his benefactions to the families of those whom he condemned, and for his efforts to reclaim the children of criminals. Some years ago he actually bought the daughter of the notorious Molly Logan, and succeeded in having her adopted by missionaries in China. My belief is that Mensch's

attempt to murder Judge Nevers was inspired by revenge for just such another episode in the judge's life, for he would not have hesitated to kidnap that ruffian's child. I have learned from his companions that Butch loudly lamented the disappearance of his daughter. This may or may not have been a blind for his own concealment of her whereabouts.

It is also true that Mensch, on each of his three appearances in court, affected Judge Nevers strangely. I recall that the judge told me so himself. Mensch seems to have epitomized all that was loathsome and vicious.

Most assuredly my old friend wrote his confession in good faith. It is a record of his mental experience, the result, possibly, of a shock which he suffered when in no condition to withstand it without temporary aberration, an aberration that may have been retained by his memory with all the photographic detail of an actual event.

Miss Laurie refuses my explanation. She agrees with the judge's inferential theory of hypnotic transference. I cannot say that it is medically impossible. Also, Miss Laurie is a woman. Here there develops another psychology—she may or may not be the better judge.

## BLUE SEA AND WHITE SAIL

BLUE sea and white sail  
All day together;  
From moon-set to moon-rise  
Not a sign of weather;  
Deep in the heart a girl  
Hid like a deep-sea pearl,  
Like the sea singing.

Foamy sea-races,  
Ah, for her breast  
Ever a stirring,  
Ever at rest;  
Far-off sea-spaces  
Meeting the skies;  
All the world's distance  
Dwells in her eyes;  
All the world's sorrow  
At my heart lies,  
Like the sea sighing!

*Richard Le Gallienne*



# EDISON AND HIS INSOMNIA SQUAD

by Oliver Simmons

**I**F you cast your mind over the things that Edison has invented, you will find that not one of them is for the purpose of telling you the time or putting you to sleep. Edison's most famous inventions are those which produce sound, light, and action—three foes of time-waste and slumber. The phonograph, the incandescent lamp, the electric railway, the motion-picture camera, the telescribe, and the storage-battery—all these are wide-awake inventions. The Wizard once devised a form for molding concrete furniture, but if he produced a concrete bedstead it has not become popular.

Edison disregards clock-time and sleep. If infinity were comprehensible, the old gentleman over in the little brick laboratory in West Orange, New Jersey, would be the first to grasp it, for he does not measure time by darkness and dawn or the chime of a clock. Edison in action is a man apart from time and space.

The sun tells other people, twice a day, that it is time to rise or time to go to bed. It tells Edison nothing. It would not concern him—except as a scientific puzzle—if the sun ceased its apparent rising and setting.

Sleep and food, light and dusk, the things that punctuate other men's lives, are negligible in the great inventor's life when he is at work, and that is most of the time. That is one reason why he has done so much. He has never allowed his mental motor to be stalled by a meal or a bed. He has wrung as much work-time from life as if he had lived a century and a half at the average man's rate. And yet, although he will be

seventy years old next February, he looks nearer sixty.

When he has nothing extraordinary to do, Edison sleeps five hours of the twenty-four. These usually are the hours from two o'clock to seven in the morning. As soon as he finds a task worthy of his full effort, he throws aside this indulgence and convention, and sacrifices everything to the work in hand.

Edison takes some little pride in his endurance, but he never stayed at work merely for the purpose of satisfying himself that he could keep his brain and his hands going twice as long as ordinary mortals. He stayed awake because there was work to do.

## ONLY SIXTEEN HOURS A DAY

In September, 1912, the time-clock at the laboratory showed that "the boss" put in two hundred and twenty-two hours and fifty-four minutes of work in two weeks. He did not punch the clock, nor did he suggest that tabs should be kept on his comings and goings. He had other fish to fry. He was then trying to commercialize the diamond-disk record.

An inventor, you know, usually has two hurdles to jump. The first is to perfect an idea and a model of it. The second hurdle, and often the harder one, is to get the thing into such shape that it can be put on the market at a profit. Edison's invention of the disk was perfect, but he had yet to standardize the production of it on a large scale. Seven loyal, young, and vigorous employees worked with him long and well—half as long, if not half as well, as the chief himself.



Edison keeps the same group of assistants about him all the way through a certain set of experiments. He lays out the work for them, and they make careful note of each test and each result. They record the exact minute at which a certain phase is reached in every stage of a process.

The Wizard, then only sixty-five, was working the seven men hard, and yet the results did not satisfy him. After long shifts the men would go away in pairs to indulge in food, baths, and beds. The idea of a man going home to loll in the hay for six or seven hours at a crucial time did not strike Edison as just the thing. He is not a slave-driver, but these seven men had no worthy understudies. He blamed himself, too, when he found that he was spending only sixteen or seventeen hours a day in the shop.

"It is quite evident," he said to his young men, "that our work is too much interrupted by the daily routine of our lives. Just now we need to give this task our undivided attention." There was a guilty flush on the face of a youth who had spent six minutes shaving himself that morning. "Let the eight of us set out with the idea of wasting as little time as possible."

#### THE INSOMNIA SQUAD AT WORK

That was the beginning of the Insomnia Squad. The picture of the group at supper was taken a month later. You cannot read it in their faces, but for five weeks the whole crew, captain and all, worked from one hundred and forty to one hundred and fifty hours a week. The lights burned day and night. Edison did not know or care whether it was noon or midnight.

This, really, was old stuff for him. Up to 1902 he had made it his habit to work nineteen and one-half hours a day. Then he cut it to eighteen hours. Going back to twenty hours was play for him, particularly because he was on the trail of a discovery.

As for his young men, they suffered the first week. They had heavy lids, red eyes, poor appetites, and numb feet. Then they "came back," and wondered why they had ever been eight-hour slugabeds and emulators of *Zany Ziddlepate*. They ate as Edison ate—what happened to hand, and when opportunity came.

The picture on page 627 shows them at supper in the workshop at two o'clock in the morning. The inventor has yielded to etiquette to the extent of tossing aside his old slouch hat. He is about to attack a bit of Hamburger steak. Unseen, in the offing, are apple pie and a pot of coffee.

Edison is always a small eater, and when he is on the trail of a scientific mystery he and his squad are light on food. They eat four times a day, sparingly. A piece of steak about a cubic inch in size is Edison's idea of plenty of meat for one meal. Or, instead of the steak, he may have a couple of broiled sardines on toast. Nine or ten ounces of food a day is enough, he believes, to nourish anybody except a manual laborer.

He is not a diet crank, but expresses, rather, a liking for what he calls mechanic's grub. Potatoes, onions, fried ham, pork and beans, and, last but by no means least, pie—these are the things that come into the laboratory when the chase is on.

Edison says he must have pie or his imagination fails. In September, 1873, he walked the streets of New York for two days, without food, before he found a friend who would lend him a dollar. Then he ate a whole apple pie and two apple dumplings, and drank two cups of coffee. This restored his confidence in life, and two hours later he got a job repairing the Wall Street ticker-service, which had become demoralized at the worst hour of the Black Friday panic.

#### THE CONQUEST OF SOMNOLENCE

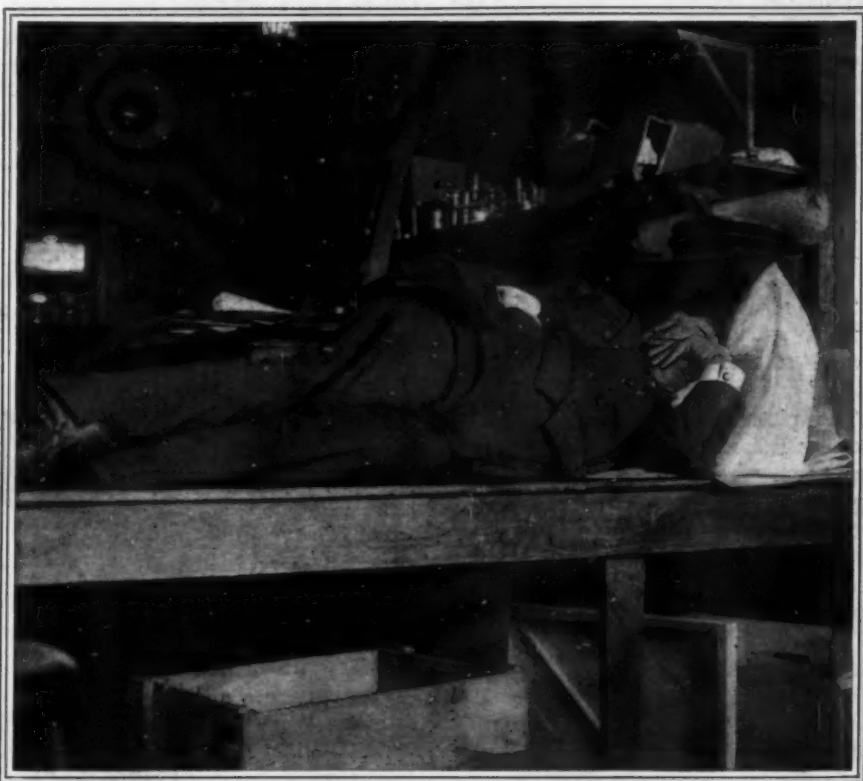
If Edison and his men have proven that they can live on a half-allowance of

sleep for weeks at a time, why can't every one do likewise?

The answer is easy. Every one hasn't work of such absorbing interest to keep his faculties alert. The young men around Edison are as keen about his efforts as

be done. The Insomnia Squad proceeds to do them.

If there is a quarter of an hour when the chief can do nothing personally, he stretches himself on the nearest bench, shelf, or table, and in thirty seconds he



MR. EDISON TAKING ONE OF HIS BRIEF NAPS ON A TABLE IN HIS LABORATORY AT WEST ORANGE—HE USED TO FOLD HIS COAT FOR A HEAD-REST, BUT HE NOW USES A PILLOW, TO SAVE THE TIME SPENT IN FOLDING THE COAT

he is. They are his hands, without which he could do only a fraction of what he does.

Edison and his squad work like fiends when they are "fishing for a bug," as they say at the laboratory. That means that they are searching for some missing quality, quantity, or combination that will add something toward the perfect whole.

Edison makes the plans. He lays out, perhaps, four or five hundred things to

is asleep. For years his pillow was his own coat thrown over a chuck from a lathe. One of the family gave him a regular pillow, and he uses this now, because it saves the time that it would take to fold his coat.

One touch, when he is needed, and Edison is awake, smiling, and in instant possession of all his faculties. And woe betide those who neglect to rouse him at the appointed minute! He wants to know. He must see every cast that is

made in fishing for the bug. He observes what results came of the last test, and this guides him in the next series of moves.

Once, when interesting results were coming rapidly, he went for three days and four nights without taking a wink, without even washing his face. Then Mrs. Edison came over to the laboratory and kidnaped him.

#### LEARNING FROM FAILURES

On another occasion, after forty-eight hours of sleepless, fruitless toil, a friend commiseratingly remarked that it was too bad that all his pains had produced no results.

"No results!" said Edison. "Why, man, I got a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won't work!"

The picture on the preceding page, showing Edison asleep on a bare bench, was taken when he was fishing for the bug in the "speaker" or reproducer of the diamond disk. He made two thousand five hundred and twelve experiments before he got what he wanted. In that period it was not necessary to nudge him to wake him up. Edison is quite deaf to the human voice, but not to the phonograph. When the reproducer was ready for another test, the squad turned on the machine and the inventor woke at the first bar.

"I don't remember what that tune was," said Edison's chief engineer, Miller Reese Hutchison, the other day, "and I hope I never hear it again. I know that it was a woman singing from high to low—an admirable tune for testing. That song—the only song we heard that month—became a nightmare before it had been played five hundred times; and after that we had to listen to it two thousand times more."

At that time Mr. Hutchison went for ten days with only one hour of sleep each night. His regular allowance is, like Mr. Edison's, five hours; but he does not believe that the ordinary mortal, in

the ordinary job, can get along with so little sleep.

#### THE FASCINATION OF LABORATORY WORK

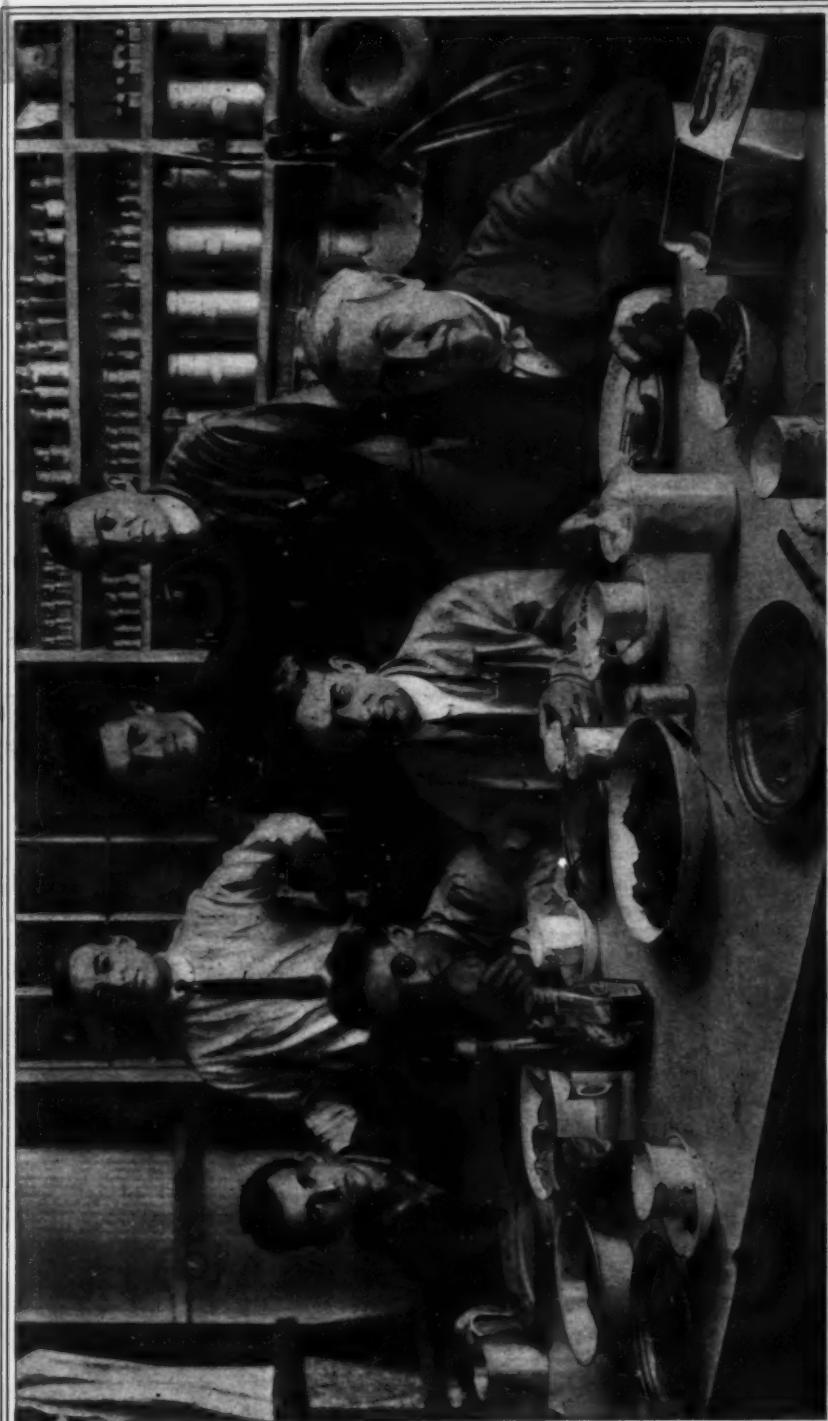
"Experimenting is not like working in a rut," he said. "There is such a variety in laboratory work that the brain is kept interested all the time. I couldn't keep a set of books for ten hours a day without falling asleep over it. I don't see how anybody could. I hear me tell of playing poker for forty hours at a stretch. Well, experimenting has the same fascinating for us as poker has for others. No man can work long and hard at anything unless he is interested in it. The men of the Insomnia Squad are deeply interested in everything they do. Their endurance ought to be a lesson to parents. A father who tries to make a lawyer of a boy who is not interested in law is putting a terrible handicap on him."

Mr. Hutchison explained that the Insomnia Squad was never kept awake for the sake of seeing how long the men could hold out.

"Mr. Edison knew that the best results in experimenting were accomplished by practically incessant work. The number of experiments that have to be tried is almost unlimited. The most improbable ones are as likely to succeed as others that seem most promising. Nobody's judgment is good, Mr. Edison thinks, until it is tried out. Whether in the laboratory or in politics, the man who wants to know how something new will work has got to make a stab at it. The Insomnia Squad went without sleep so that it could keep on stabbing."

#### TAKING CARE OF GOOD EYES

Most of us who have tried to cut down our measure of sleep have found that the eyes are soon affected. Nature has been kind to Edison in the matter of sight. The ordinary optic nerve is about the size of a hair; Edison's is more like a piece of fine cord. And his chief engineer, Mr. Hutchison, makes him conserve his sight.



MR. EDISON AND HIS ASSISTANTS OF THE SO-CALLED INSOMNIA SQUAD TAKING A SUPPER OF HAMBURGER STEAK, APPLE PIE, AND COFFEE, AT TWO O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, DURING A BRIEF REST FROM THE NIGHT-AND-DAY WORK THEY DO WHEN PERFECTING AN INVENTION

*Photo copyrighted by Thomas A. Edison*

Mr. Hutchison himself has good eyes, too, and he means to keep them good. The lights under which he and his chief do their desk-work are specially fitted to their needs.

A metal rod, shaped somewhat like a shepherd's crook, stands beside Mr. Edison's desk. The hundred-candle-power lamp at the end of the crook is six and one-half feet from the floor. As Mr. Edison sits at the desk, a plumb-line dropped from the bulb would come about six inches away from his left shoulder. This arrangement gives a bright light on the desk without permitting reflected light from papers to reach the inventor's eyes.

Mr. Hutchison is even more careful. He wears a light silk peaked cap when at work, shutting out all glare from above. He also wears amber glasses, although his vision is perfect. The amber glass shuts out the red rays of daylight, which enter even through sanded windows. These glasses enable the wearer to enter upon twenty hours of work, after four hours of sleep, without red eyes or tired lids.

He also keeps his lamp burning day and night, so that the light falling upon his desk is unchanging. There is no eye-shock, such as might be caused by the transition from the rays of the incandescent to daylight.

"Humanity can adjust itself to almost any circumstances," says Mr. Edison in explaining his independence of sleep.

But humanity will kindly remember, if it tries to duplicate the endurance of the Orange wonder-man, that certain rules have to be observed if one wishes to cut his sleep allowance in two.

#### MR. EDISON'S HEALTH RULES

Alcoholic stimulants must be avoided; or, as Mr. Edison himself would say:

"No booze!"

If you use coffee to keep your lids open, dilute it freely, as Edison does, with hot milk.

Don't take any more food than you need to keep going. Your system has plenty of work without being asked to dispose of superfluous fuel.

See that you have plenty of fresh air, and that your lighting system is adapted to the requirements of your eyes.

When you go to bed, don't take your troubles with you. Edison doesn't, and he is asleep in half a minute.

But the thing that you must have to start with is a job which interests you more than anything else in the world; a job which is full of variety and action; a job which is your life and your play, your present and your future. If you haven't got such a job, you must get one, or else stick to the seven-hour snooze.

#### RECOGNITION

If in some dim hereafter your pale shade  
 Encounter mine a moment, shall I feel  
 Your pure, sweet presence? Or does memory fade  
 When Life's frail flower lies crushed beneath Death's heel?  
 Your form and every feature I recall,  
 Hold them most dear; yet never your shy soul  
 Could I possess completely; never all  
 Its secret ways, its entrances control.  
 Feature and form are dust, shall dust remain;  
 Only the soul you veiled from me endures,  
 Inviolable still. Yet, if we meet again,  
 I must remember that shy soul of yours  
 By the faint fragrances of happy days  
 That you would breathe down dim Elysian ways.

*Ernest Blake*



# CHAMPAGNE AND THE GREAT WAR

By Frederic Dean



DOM PERIGNON, THE BLIND CELLARER OF THE ABBEY OF ST. PIERRE  
TASTING GRAPES FOR THE "MARRYING" OF DIFFERENT VARIETIES

**I**N all the smiling and fertile land of France there is no richer and—in time of peace—more prosperous district than the rolling plain that circles about Rheims, Epernay, and Chalons-sur-Marne. Here, during two strenuous years, has taken place some of the fiercest fighting of the great war. Here, too, are some of the finest vineyards of the world; for this was in Roman days the *campania* which later gave its name to the province of Champagne.

Here, two years ago, during the great battle of the Marne, in which the French

first stayed the tide of invasion, the fighting armies met and struggled. Acres of precious vines were trampled underfoot and destroyed; but other acres escaped undamaged, and the huge underground storehouses of Rheims and Epernay suffered little. Frenchmen will tell you the picturesque but improbable story that the German officers had orders to protect the chief industry of this region as far as possible, as it would be a valuable acquisition for the victors when the war ended and the Teutonic frontiers were pushed westward to include it.



THE WIDOW CLICQUOT, WHOSE NAME IS FAMOUS IN THE ANNALS OF CHAMPAGNE—SHE WAS THE ACTIVE HEAD OF HER OWN WINE-HOUSE UNTIL SHE DIED AT EIGHTY-NINE

These deep cellars, or *caves*, are one of the factors that have helped to make the wine of Champagne world-famous. Of course, holes in the ground can be dug anywhere, but it would be difficult to construct at any reasonable cost such a network of subterranean warehouses as that which honeycombs the dry, chalky soil of this region.

Some of the cellars date back to the days of the Romans. Their function is not only to provide safe storage, but to give the gradations of temperature needed in preparing the sparkling juice of the grape. The typical smaller wine-house of

Rheims is a four-storied building, with two stories above ground and two below it, so as to afford the various degrees of coolness needed.

#### THE PIONEERS OF CHAMPAGNE

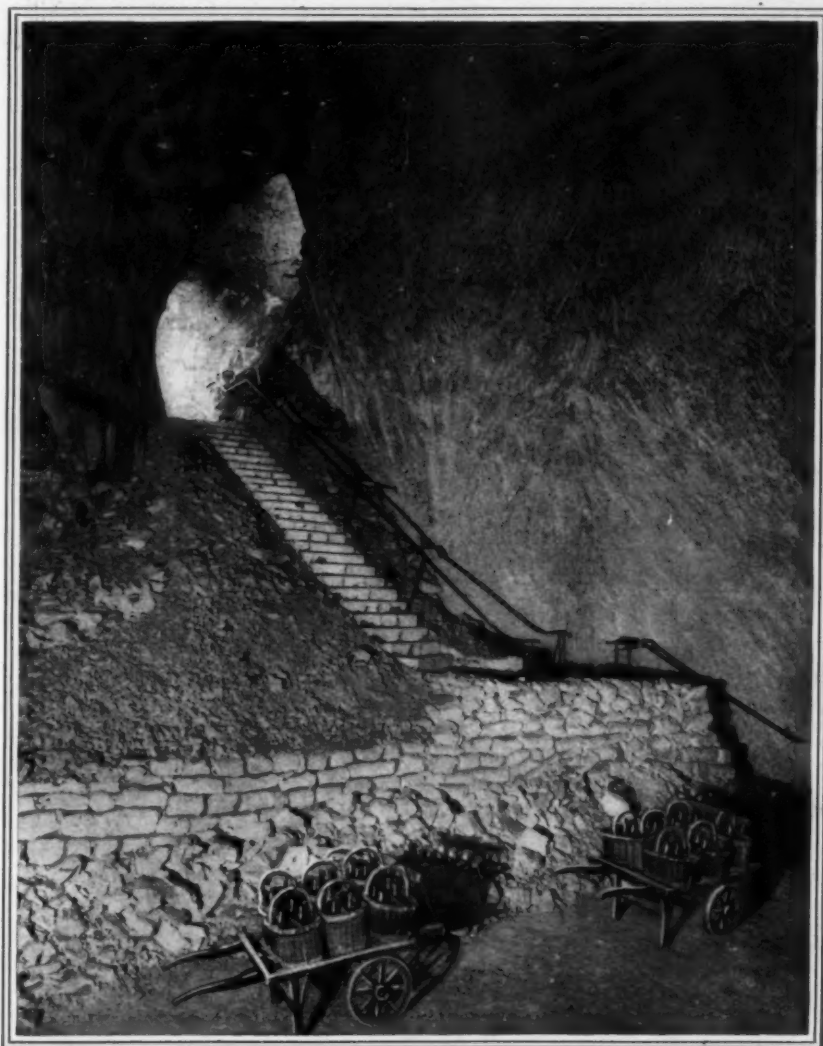
There is an old French saying that "those who deal in the wine of Champagne will live long and prosper." There seems to be some evidence, at least, of its truth. The widow Clicquot, one of the celebrated figures of the industry, lived to be eighty-nine, and to see her daughter and granddaughter married to members of the nobility. M. Duchesne, court doctor

to Louis XIV, who prescribed a daily supper of salad and champagne as the secret of good health, died in his ninety-second year. Most of the heads of the champagne houses are veterans, and a great proportion of their subordinates have served them for thirty years or more. One of the reasons why the work of the vineyards and *caves* is not wholly suspended by the terrible distractions of war is the fact that so many of the workmen

are too old for military service, and yet are hale and hearty laborers.

As for the prosperity promised by the adage, it is easier to imagine than to compute the monetary tribute that the world has paid to the lords of these sunny vineyards along the winding Marne and the narrow Vesle.

In the old abbey church of St. Pierre at Haut Villers, in the floor beside the altar, are two marble slabs bearing the names of



ONE OF THE ANCIENT CAVES, OR CELLARS, OF RHEIMS, BELONGING TO THE HOUSE OF RUINART—SOME OF THESE UNDERGROUND STOREHOUSES DATE BACK TO ROMAN DAYS

the originators of sparkling champagne—Dom Perignon and Dom Ruynart. The former left no kith nor kin, but the latter had a nephew, Nicholas Ruynart, to whom his uncle had entrusted the secret of mak-

ing the precious wine, and in 1729 he founded the first champagne house—that of Ruinart, as it is spelled to-day. The present head of the house, André de Ruinart, Vicomte de Brimont, is the seventh



MARSHAL LANNES, THE FIRST DUC DE MONTEBELLO, THE FAMOUS SOLDIER WHO INTRODUCED NAPOLEON TO THE SPARKLING WINE OF CHAMPAGNE, AND WHOSE SON FOUNDED A WINE-HOUSE



THE CHÂTEAU DE MONTEBELLO, HOME OF THE DESCENDANTS OF MARSHAL LANNES, OCCUPIED BY RUSSIAN INVADERS IN 1814 AND TEMPORARILY BY GERMANS IN 1914

in direct line from the earliest maker of champagne for sale.

The wine known as "Veuve Clicquot" was made famous overnight. The original Clicquot died when a young man, leaving his widow, a woman of twenty-seven, with a babe in its cradle, and with a wine business that was on its last legs. This was at the time when the Allies were crushing Napoleon in the campaign of 1814, and Rheims was occupied by a Russian corps. Being unable to sell her wine, the widow gave a quantity of it to the Russian officers, who found it greatly to their liking. When they returned to Petrograd, the widow followed up her attack by sending a shipload of champagne to "her nice-looking officers." The vessel was lost, and with it the precious cargo.

Nothing daunted, the widow sent a second ship laden to the gunwales with the best wine she had in stock, and this time the venture brought her a very handsome profit. Moreover, her wine became known throughout the length and breadth of Russia, and the success of the house of Clicquot was assured.

The little town of Ay, a few miles north-

east of Epernay, dates back to the sixth century and was a thousand years old when the great Henry IV of France used to visit it. A few yards from the parish church there still stands a quaint timber building which is shown as his *vendangeoire*, or vintage-house.

"Let others drink what they please," said the founder of the Bourbon line. "I drink the wine of Ay!"

#### NAPOLÉON AND CHAMPAGNE

Close to Ay, on the banks of the Marne and of the canal that parallels the river, is the neighbor village of Mareuil, better known as Mareuil-sur-Marne, the seat of the house of Montebello. The first Duc de Montebello, Marshal Lannes, was the man who introduced Napoleon to champagne. The marshal's son, it appears, decided to follow a more peaceful calling than that which brought fame and an early death to his father, and went into the wine business. Local tradition says that he found in Mareuil-sur-Marne a delightful *château*, owned by the last of an old French family, who would sell to none but a purchaser of high rank. He was





THE PROCESS OF MAKING CHAMPAGNE—SHIPPING THE GRAPES FROM ONE OF THE MANY VINEYARDS OF THE DISTRICT AROUND EPERNAY

delighted to have as his successor the heir to the title of Montebello, and let him have the fine old place for a song. The son of the present head of the house married the grandniece of Cambacérès, the second consul under Napoleon.

It is difficult to get away from the name of Napoleon in France. There is a curious souvenir of the great emperor in one of the wine-cellars of Epernay, where a black marble slab, dated July 26, 1807, commemorates a banquet at which Jean Remi Moët, mayor of the town and maker of champagne, entertained Napoleon and Josephine. If ever champagne flowed like water, according to the proverbial phrase, it surely was on that occasion, for it is recorded that six thousand bottles were emptied.

Most of the wine-houses of this favored district have records or associations of historical interest. For instance, the residence of the late Mme. Pommery, on the narrow Rue Vauthier le Noir, in Rheims, stands on a site once occupied by a Roman

temple and later by the girlhood home of Mary Queen of Scots. It was said of this ill-fated princess, during her brief heyday as Queen of France, that she bathed in champagne—a habit which she probably learned in Rheims.

#### UNDERGROUND RHEIMS IN WAR-TIME

A new and poignant set of memories for the proud and ancient city of King Clovis and St. Rémi will date from the present war. The great *caves* of Rheims, owned by the houses of Pommery, Roederer, Heidsieck, Mumm, and others, have become a veritable underground city of refuge. When the splendid cathedral had been fired by German shells, as house after house was demolished, and street after street became more and more untenable, the people found shelter in the wine-cellars.

At first, conditions were pitiful enough. The refugees were huddled together in groups of hundreds and even thousands, with but little food, and with only the light of a few candles to illuminate some



THE PROCESS OF MAKING CHAMPAGNE—WEIGHING THE GRAPES AS THEY ARRIVE AT ONE OF THE WINE-MAKING ESTABLISHMENTS

huge and crowded vault. Gradually, however, the underground colonies settled down to normal living. Schools were established for the children; mass was said before improvised altars, with candles stuck into bottles in place of the regular candelabra, the worshipers sitting on up-turned champagne-boxes.

Last winter more than thirteen thousand children attended the subterranean academies of Rheims. As many as possible of the regularly appointed teachers were brought into service, and the usual school routine, with text-books and blackboards, was followed. Every child is provided with a gas-mask, to be worn whenever he or she goes on the street. All the workmen who remain at their posts are obliged to observe the same regulation.

As to the amount of work being done in the vineyards and the *caves*, reports vary. Some establishments are closed; others seem to be overcoming the difficulties of war-time with French patience and ingenuity. The Marquis de Polignac,

present head of the house of Pommery, is quoted as saying that his men, only a few kilometers from the enemy's lines, "ply their labors daily," going to and from work unmindful of the bombardment. Sometimes, if the cannonading is very heavy, they are a bit late, but they would consider it a dishonor if they did not appear. In carrying and gathering the grapes, the work is done by fits and starts, whenever they can get some old vehicle or a railway-car.

M. Joseph Krug, head of another well-known firm, went into the French army as a major of artillery, and is now reported a prisoner in Germany, while Mme. Krug has been serving as head of a military hospital unit equipped at her own expense. The Vicomte de Brimont, who has already been mentioned, "remained at the works for eight months after the beginning of hostilities, and until his last workmen had left."

From Epernay and Ay, farther back from the present firing-line, comes the re-



THE PROCESS OF MAKING CHAMPAGNE—THE FIRST PRESSING OF THE GRAPES, BY WHICH THE BEST AND PUREST OF THE JUICE IS EXTRACTED AND RUN INTO CASKS

port that last year's vintage was good, and that less damage has been suffered than was at first supposed. Throughout the district, however—and probably in all the wine-making regions of Europe, to a greater or less degree—there is a shortage of bottles and casks. Many glass-works, especially those in Belgium and northern France, have been closed by the war, and the wood that was formerly used for barrels now goes to build shelters for soldiers in the trenches. Some months ago an enterprising New York exporter tried to gather up a shipment of used bottles to be sent to France for refilling, but he found that at the present rate of freight-charges the cost would be prohibitive.

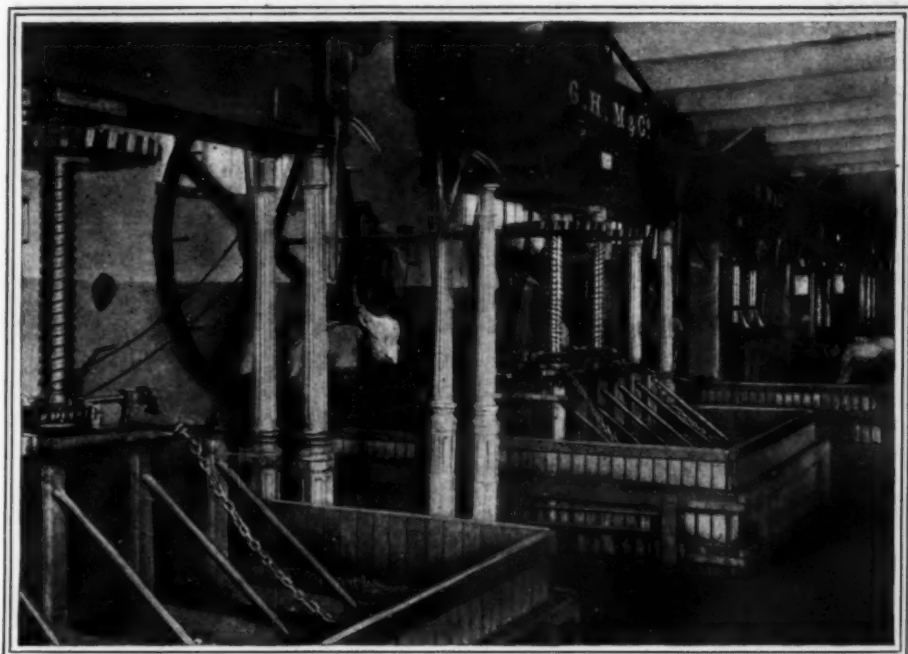
#### THE VINEYARDS OF THE MARNE

So much champagne is constantly kept in storage that the experts are much more afraid of widespread damage to the vineyards of the Marne region than of any stoppage of production for a season or two. The highly cultivated vines of this

district need the care bestowed upon sickly children. It takes five years of infinite skill and patience to bring a vine to bearing, and some of the best producers are two hundred years old.

The champagne houses seldom have extensive vineyards of their own, but prefer to depend upon the small farmers to furnish them with grapes. The country about Ay and Epernay looks like a crazy-quilt with its intricate divisions and subdivisions—tiny little patches of ground marked off with the boundaries of the various owners. Within a space of forty thousand acres there are more than sixteen hundred individual vine-growers, all happy, all comfortably off, and all proud of their own grapes. These are the men who have the future of the champagne business in their hands.

At present, of course, there is a scarcity of laborers. To meet this difficulty, on the request of the mayors of the different communities, prisoners of war have been assigned to assist in the cultivation of the



THE PROCESS OF MAKING CHAMPAGNE—THE SECOND PRESSING OF THE GRAPES, DONE BY MACHINERY WHICH CRUSHES OUT THE REMAINING JUICE FOR COMMONER USES

vines and in the picking of the grapes. The growers furnish the men with meals and beds, and give each man four cents a day for spending-money.

There are five hundred million vines in the district—vines that before the war were worth all of twenty-five million dollars. Now, if it has been possible for these small farmers to keep their vines in good condition, free from phylloxera and other pests, and to care properly for the soil, then—especially if they have a good crop this year, and are able to pick it—the losses suffered during 1914 and 1915 will be no serious detriment to the champagne industry.

It may be reassuring to the pessimists to know that the production of grapes in the district, in an ordinary year, vastly exceeds the quantity needed to keep up the world's supply of champagne. Only about one-sixteenth of a normal crop is treated by the slow, delicate process of double fermentation necessary to make the brilliant effervescence of the sparkling

wine of Rheims and Epernay. The rest of the grapes are used in other ways.

There is little fear, therefore, of a failure of the epicure's favorite beverage through an actual shortage of the raw material. The question of each year's vintage of champagne is one of the quality of the grapes, and not of the quantity.

#### PROBUS, PATRON OF THE VINEYARDS

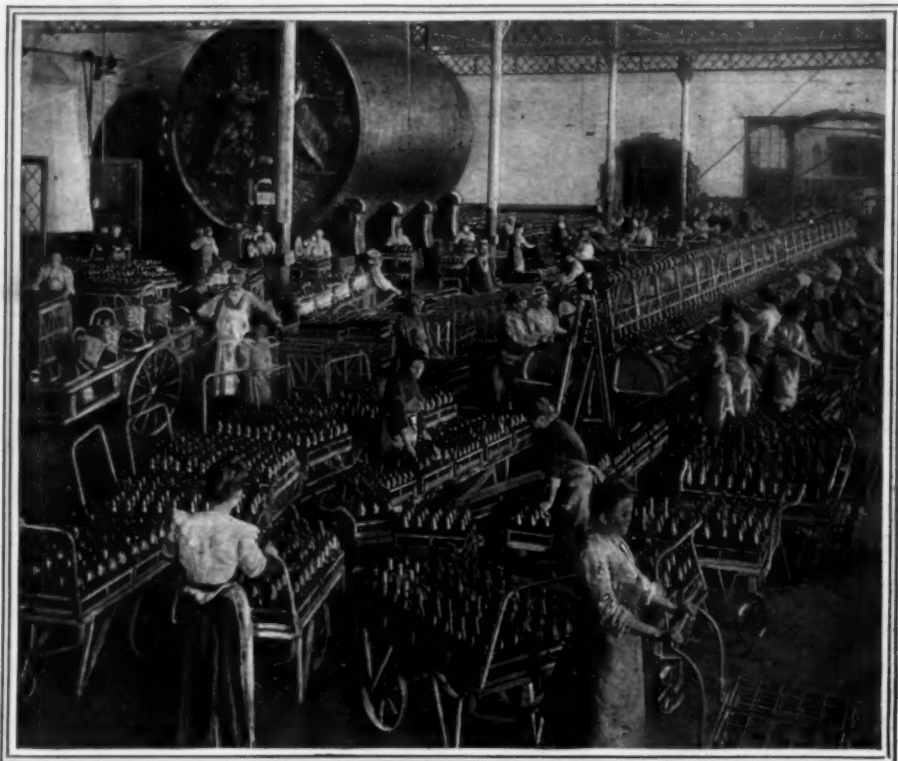
Vines have been in continuous growth in the *campania* of the Marne and the Vesle since the reign of the Emperor Probus, in the latter years of the third century of the Christian era. Indeed, their beginning was much farther back, and is lost in the mists of prehistoric times; but the arbitrary Domitian—who had quite enough other vices, if he was a foe to wine-bibbing—declared that in Gaul "the plant of Bacchus had usurped the place better filled by Ceres," and ordered all the vineyards of the province uprooted.

It was two centuries later that Probus,



who was himself a gardener's son, gave permission to the Gallic wine-growers to replant their vines. Tradition says that the emperor set out the first shoots in the district of Rheims with his own hand, and that the ancient *Porte de Mars*, the chief Roman monument of the cathedral city,

era of the Middle Ages, when the people of Rheims were putting all their zeal and skill into their magnificent Gothic fane, much of its decorative scheme was built upon the twining branches and graceful leaves of the vine. Over one of its doorways St. Rémi stands blessing the empty



THE PROCESS OF MAKING CHAMPAGNE—BOTTLING THE WINE AFTER ITS FIRST FERMENTATION, AS DONE BY WOMEN SINCE FRANCE CALLED HER MEN INTO THE ARMY

was erected to commemorate the imperial visit.

From that time the tendrils of the grape have been entwined, as it were, with the history of the region. One of the first acts of Clovis, when anointed here as the first Christian monarch of France, was to bless the vines of the province. St. Rémi, the good bishop who baptized the Frankish prince, was himself a viticulturist, and at his death bequeathed his vineyards to the priests and deacons of his diocese.

Later, in the great cathedral-building

cask which immediately became filled with the rarest of wine. The arches of the cathedral are covered with vine-branches. The numerous bishops who had left vineyards to the church were remembered with their sculptured figures wreathed with vines.

Some of the prelates of the thirteenth century, in their loyalty to the local industry, went so far as to excommunicate "all beers and like drinks," such as were brewed in Flanders and in England. In 1420, however, by the treaty of Troyes,



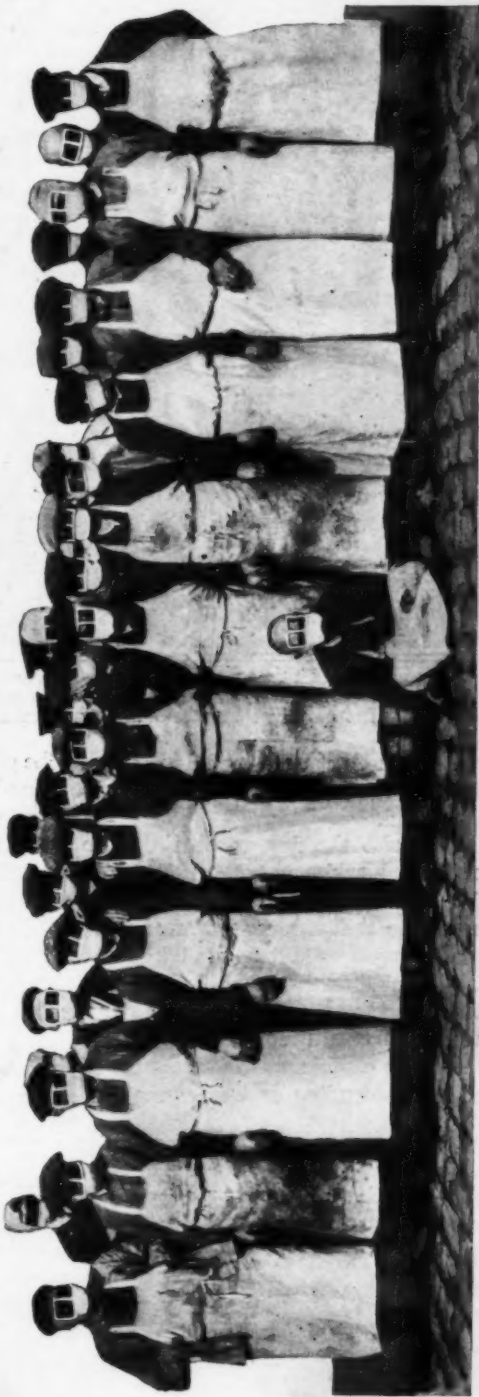
Rheims passed under the British sway, and an English governor, the Earl of Salisbury, imported so much beer that in 1427 the city council complained that the people of the province were "swollen from drinking too much malt liquor." Only two years later, Jeanne d'Arc had Charles VII crowned in the cathedral, and banished the British and their beer.

#### THE CELLARER OF ST. PIERRE

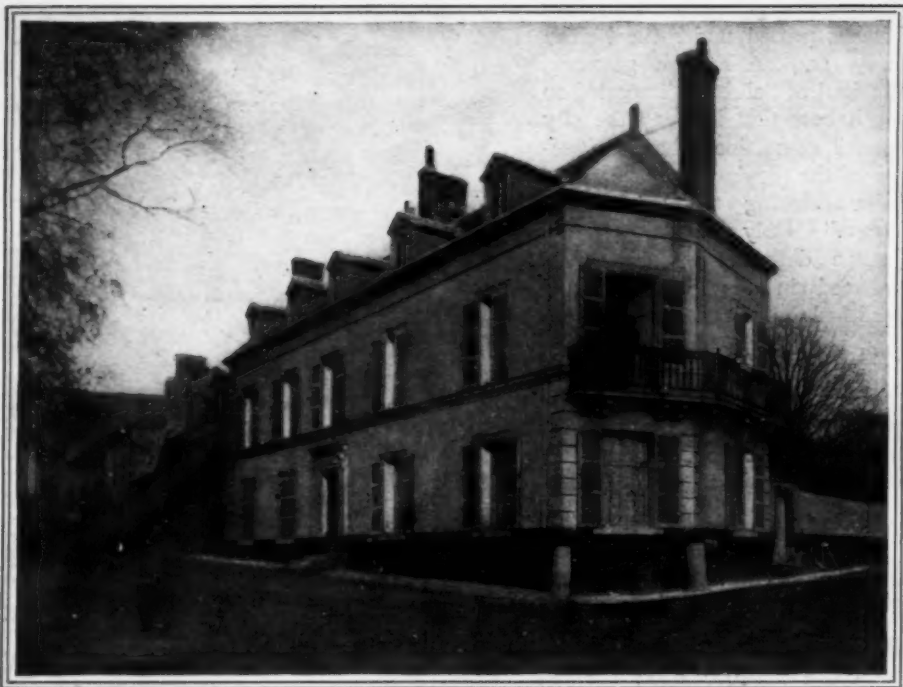
The "fizz" of sparkling champagne was discovered wholly by accident. In 1670 Dom Perignon, of the brotherhood of St. Pierre, was appointed chief cellarer of the abbey of Haut Villers, long famous for its red and white wines. Dom Perignon had a strong as well as a wise head, and was of an inventive nature. Believing that he could improve upon the old method of sealing the bottles—filling the neck with a pad of hemp or cloth steeped in oil—he whittled out pieces of cork, and used them as stoppers.

Some of his bottles, filled with partially fermented wine and tightly sealed with corks, chanced to be put away and forgotten for a time. When found and opened, their contents proved to possess a brilliant effervescence, on account of the confined carbonic acid gas that had been generated. The *vin mousseux* was pronounced to be excellent by the brethren, who ordered that a larger stock should be treated by the new process.

To the expert taste of Dom Perignon, grapes from various vineyards had distinctly differing flavors. Those in his own vineyard, at Haut Villers, had the taste of nuts; those from the district of Ay, that of peaches; those from Avenay, that of strawberries; and those from Verzenay, that of



MEN WHO, BEING PAST MILITARY AGE OR UNFIT FOR SERVICE, HAVE REMAINED AT WORK IN THE WINE-HOUSES OF RHEIMS—THEY ARE PROVIDED WITH MASKS TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE GASES OF EXPLODING SHELLS AS THEY PASS THROUGH THE STREETS



A STREET CORNER IN THE VILLAGE OF MAREUIL-SUR-MARNE, IN THE HEART OF THE VINEYARD DISTRICT AROUND EPERNAY—THE GERMAN INVADERS REACHED THIS POINT DURING THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE AND WERE DRIVEN BACK FROM IT BY THE FRENCH

plums. Dom Perignon blended them together and made a composite that was highly prized.

He was also the first to obtain white wine from black grapes, by carefully forcing out the juice without crushing the skins, so that the coloring matter of the dark envelopes did not fall into the liquid. Claiming that the black grapes had more body and the white more fragrance, he mingled the two varieties, and made a wine combining the excellence of both. This blending or "marrying" of

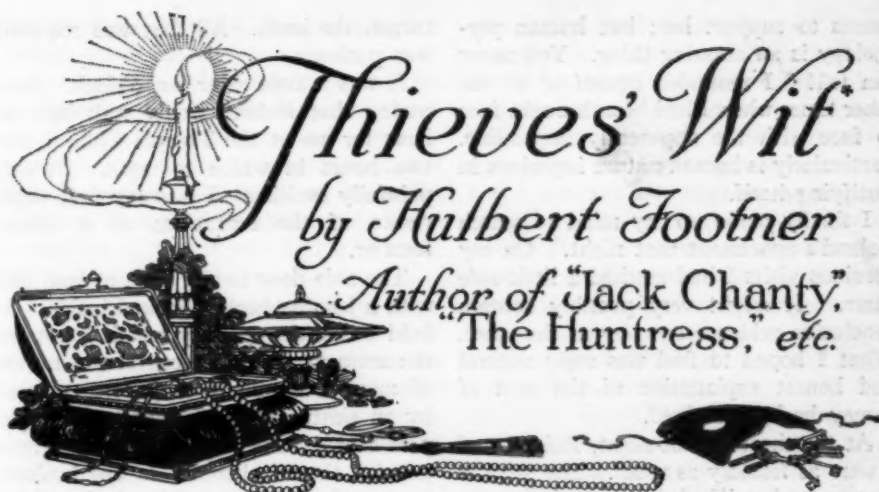
the grapes is the chief secret of the modern wine-houses. It is what is done at the *cuvée*. Each house has its own blender, and each its secret blend—an asset as priceless as the vine, the soil, and the process of manufacture.

In his old age Dom Perignon became blind, but so expert had he become in distinguishing the taste of the various grapes that he retained his position of chief cellarer of St. Pierre until his dying day. Of all the makers of champagne he still remains the great historical figure.

#### BY MY CAMP-FIRE

OUR one sun sets; a thousand thousand suns  
In shining legions march across the sky,  
And here, beneath the infinite hosts of heaven,  
Companioned by unnumbered universes  
And countless unseen worlds, I spread my blanket  
And sleep by snatches, waking with the stars.

Harry Kemp



#### SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED

THE story is told by Benjamin Enderby, who, after years of working for a bare living in New York, has inherited a small competence, and has established himself as a "confidential investigator," or high-class private detective. His first client is Irma Hamerton, an actress, who has lost a valuable necklace of dark pearls of a rare kind, known to jewelers as blue pearls. Suspicion points to some member of her company or theater staff, for the pearls disappeared during a performance, a string of imitation stones being substituted for them. It seems that Miss Hamerton is not so anxious to recover her jewels as to know who purloined them, and she insists that there shall be no recourse to the police. The reason for this, as Enderby discovers, is that she is loved by her leading man, Roland Quarles, that she at least partially returns his affection, and that she desires above all things to know that he is not the guilty man.

Enderby first consults Alfred Mount, owner of a Fifth Avenue jewelry-shop, from whom the necklace was purchased. Mr. Mount promises his help, and undertakes to notify the trade of the loss, but can do nothing further. Next, calling himself William Faxon, and slightly disguising his appearance, the detective arranges to take a minor rôle in Miss Hamerton's play. He also secures a similar engagement for Sadie Farrell, a girl whom he has enlisted to help him, and who assumes the stage name of Miss Covington.

In this way Enderby is enabled to study the other members of the company. His suspicions instinctively turn toward an actor named Kenton Milbourne, but such facts as he can discover seem to point toward Quarles. The most telling bit of evidence is a paper picked up in the theater, which proves to be part of a letter in cryptograph, referring to the stolen jewels and to the distribution of "the money." In Quarles's dressing-room, in a pocket of the young actor's coat, Enderby finds a note in the same cryptograph, conveying a warning that Faxon and Miss Covington are detectives. Moreover, he learns that Quarles recently deposited in a bank forty thousand dollars in cash.

Nevertheless, he is reluctant to believe the leading man guilty. Miss Hamerton, whom he informs of the evidence he has found, also discredits it; but she cannot marry Quarles unless his innocence is proved. Enderby, deeply sympathetic with her sufferings in the torture of uncertainty, undertakes to settle the matter within twenty-four hours.

#### X

LEAVING Miss Hamerton, I walked twice around Bryant Park to put my thoughts in order. I wished to believe in Roland's innocence almost as ardently as she did, but I had to force myself to keep an open mind. A fixed idea one way or the other is fatal to any

investigator; so I argued against him for a while to strike a balance.

I told myself that there is a type of man who will stop at nothing to secure the woman he desires. In the bottom of my heart, like anybody else, I had a sneaking admiration for the type.

True, I had never heard of a man robbing a woman in order to secure the

means to support her; but human psychology is an amazing thing. You never can tell! I reminded myself of all the other times when I had been brought face to face with the apparently impossible. Particularly is human nature ingenious in justifying itself.

I finally made up my mind to search Roland's apartment that night. On my previous visits I had marked a little safe there. It might very possibly contain conclusive evidence one way or the other. What I hoped to find was some natural and honest explanation of the sum of money he had received.

At the theater, that night, Roland and I were as friendly as usual. The shadow was somewhat lifted from his dark eyes, which burned with an expectant fire. An extraordinary restlessness possessed him. For all his professed hatred of it, he outdid himself in playing his rôle. As far as I could see, he and Irma held no communication outside the play.

In pursuance of the plan I had made, I insisted on his supping with me. I was free to leave the theater after the second act, so I went on ahead—to order the supper, I said. He was to meet me at the Thespis Club at half past eleven. I did order the supper there, and then hurried on to his flat, arriving some time before his customary hour of coming from the theater.

His old housekeeper, having seen me in his company several times, expressed no surprise at my coming. I said I would wait for him, and she left me to my own devices in the front room.

I satisfied myself that she had gone to her own room on the other side of the kitchen, three doors away; then I set to work.

I had brought a bunch of skeleton keys and a set of miniature housebreaking tools. I didn't require them, for I found that the little safe had one of the earliest and simplest forms of a lock. Part of my apprenticeship had been spent in learning how to open such locks by listening to the fall of the tumblers as one

turned the knob. All that was required was patience.

It was a little after ten o'clock. Supposing that Roland would wait half an hour for me at the Thespis Club, I had two hours in which to work. It was painfully exciting. I had my first experience of the sensations of a house-breaker.

The safe door swung open at last, and with a beating heart I looked inside. It held but little—a diary which I left for the moment; a wallet containing a sum of money; a bundle of papers enclosed by an elastic band. I went over the papers hastily. They consisted of insurance policies, theatrical contracts, and business letters of old dates, which had nothing whatever to do with my case.

However, there was still a little locked drawer to investigate. After a number of tries I fixed a key that would open it.

The first things I saw here were several pieces of men's jewelry, which Roland doubtless used for stage properties. There were two other articles. One was a little antique box made of some sweet-smelling wood, which contained several notes in Irma's handwriting and some withered flowers. The other—the last thing in the drawer—was a seal-leather case, such as jewelers display. Upon pressing the spring the cover flew back, and I saw lying on a bed of white velvet a string of wonderful, dusky pearls.

For many moments I gazed at them in stupid astonishment. Heaven knows what I had expected to find. Certainly not that!

What did it mean? The string looked exactly like the one that Miss Hamerton had shown me. I counted the pearls. There were sixty-seven of them.

Could this be another of Roberts's replicas? Perhaps Roland had bought it and stowed it away for sentimental reasons; but such an explanation seemed pretty far-fetched.

I carried the pearls to the electric light. There I could see the blue cast in them, like the last gleam of light in the



twilight sky. They had a wonderful fire, a deep-seated life.

An instinct told me that they were genuine pearls. If they were, this must be *the* string, for Mount had said that there were no others. I remembered that Miss Hamerton had told me she had made a little scratch on the clasp, and I eagerly looked for it. There was a kind of mark there.

At this point I shook my head and gave up speculating. Slipping the case into my pocket, I locked the drawer and closed the safe again. I switched off the lights and let myself quietly out of the flat.

I decided to go to the Thespis Club as if nothing had happened. I was not at all anxious to meet Roland until I knew where I stood, but I reflected that if I failed him it might rouse his suspicions and precipitate a catastrophe before I was ready. There was not much danger that he would look into his safe that night if I kept him late. His housekeeper would tell him that I had been there, but I could explain my visit. In the morning I would have him watched.

Roland was at the club when I arrived.

"I've been at your rooms," I said instantly. "I had an idea that I was to wait for you there; but I got thinking it over and decided I had made a mistake."

"You have a memory like a colander," he said good-naturedly. "Better do something about it!"

We sat down to our supper. Roland was in extraordinary spirits for him. All the while we ate, drank, and joked I was wondering in the back of my head what kind of a change would come over his grim, dark, laughing face if he knew what I had in my pocket.

## XI

Few would envy me my task next morning. I called up Miss Hamerton, merely saying that I would come to the hotel half an hour later.

Sadie came in, but, having kept from her what had happened, I could not discuss the present situation with her. I

was not obliged to tell her all the developments of the case, of course; but she had a moral right to my confidence, and so I felt guilty and wretched every way. Sadie, I knew, would be terribly cut up by the way things were tending, and I had not the heart to face it, with what I had to go through later.

Miss Hamerton received me with great, bright eyes that looked out of her white face like stars at dawn. The instant she caught sight of me she said:

"You have news?"

I nodded.

"Good or bad?" she whispered breathlessly.

There was no use beating around the bush.

"Bad," I said bluntly.

A hand went to her breast.

"Tell me—quickly!"

I drew out the case. She gave no sign of recognizing it. I snapped it open.

"Is this the lost necklace?" I asked.

With a little cry she seized upon it, examined the pearls, breathed upon them, looked at the clasp.

"Yes! Yes!" she exclaimed, joy struggling in her face with an underlying terror. "Where did you get it?"

"Out of a safe in Mr. Quarles's flat."

She looked at me as if stricken senseless. I had to repeat the words.

"Oh! You would not deceive me?" she whispered.

"I wish to God it were not true!" I cried.

"In his room—his room!" she muttered repeatedly.

Suddenly she sank down in a crumpled heap on the floor. I gathered her up in my arms and laid her on the sofa. I called Mrs. Bleecker, who came running, accompanied by Irma's maid.

A senseless scene of confusion followed. The foolish women roused half the hotel with their outcries. I myself carried the beautiful, inanimate girl into her bedroom. For me it was holy ground. It was almost as bare as a convent cell. It pleased me to find that she instinctive-



ly rejected luxury on retiring to her last stronghold.

I laid her on her bed—the pillow was no whiter than the cheek it bore—and returned to the outer room to await the issue. All this time, I must tell you, Mrs. Bleecker was relieving her feelings by abusing me. From the first I had apprehended hatred in that lady.

I waited a few minutes, feeling very unnecessary, and wondering if I would not do better to return to my office, when the companion came back and with a very ill grace said that Miss Hamerton wanted to know if it was convenient for me to wait a little while, until she was able to see me, and would I please say whatever was necessary to people who called.

I almost wept upon receiving this message. I sent back word that I would stay all day, if she wanted me. Mrs. Bleecker glared at me, almost beside herself with defeated curiosity. I had the necklace safe in my pocket, and she was without a clue to what had happened.

So there I was established as Miss Hamerton's representative. Everybody took orders from me and wondered who I was. The news had spread like wildfire that the famous actress had been taken ill, and the telephone rang almost continuously. I finally told the hotel people what to say, and ordered it disconnected.

I had a couple of boys stationed in the corridor to keep people from the door. I sent for two doctors; not that Irma was in any real need of medical attention, but I wished to have the support of a professional bulletin. I told them what I thought necessary. They were discreet men.

Miss Hamerton had no close relatives, and I could not see the sense of sending for any others. I forbade Mrs. Bleecker to telegraph to them. In a case of this kind solitude is the best and most merciful treatment for the sufferer. As it was, I pitied the poor girl having to endure the officious ministrations of her in-

quisitive servants, but I did not feel justified in interfering there.

Only two men were allowed past the guard in the corridor—Mr. Maurice Metz, the famous theatrical manager, and Mr. Alfred Mount.

The former stormed about the room like a wilful child. His pocketbook was hard hit, but I was firm with him. He could not see Miss Hamerton; he must be satisfied with my report. Miss Hamerton had suffered a severe nervous breakdown—with that phrase we guarded her piteous secret—and it would be out of the question for her to act for weeks to come. It was her wish that the company should be paid off and disbanded.

"Who the devil are you?" he demanded.

"I speak for Miss Hamerton," I said with a shrug.

I remembered how humbly I had once besieged this man's door with my play, and now I was turning *him* down. To satisfy him, I called Mrs. Bleecker in. He demanded of her who I was.

"I don't know!" she snapped.

Nevertheless, she had to bear me out. Miss Hamerton had sent word that the company was to be paid off with two weeks' salary, and the amount charged to her. I referred Mr. Metz to the doctors. They impressed him with medical phrases which he didn't understand. He finally departed, talking to himself and waving his hands.

Mr. Mount, of course, was very different. He came in all suave sympathy, anxious to uphold me in every way. I had wished to see him for a special purpose. I couldn't allow the possibility of a ghastly mistake being made.

I produced the fateful little seal-leather box and snapped it open again.

"Are these the lost pearls?" I asked.

The man had wonderful self-control. No muscle of his face changed; only his black eyes flamed up.

He took the box quietly, but those eyes pounced on the pearls like their prey, and wolfed them one by one. When he re-

turned the case to me, a curious smile wreathed the corners of his voluptuous mouth.

"Those are the pearls," he said quietly.

"You are *sure*?"

"Sure?" He spread out his hands. "There are no other such pearls in the world!"

I returned the box to my pocket.

"Where did you find them?" he asked.

"At present I am not free to say how they were recovered," I replied. "No doubt Miss Hamerton will allow it to be given out later."

"I think I understand," he said with a compassionate air. "I suppose there will no prosecution?"

"I do not know," I said blandly.

"Perhaps it would be better never to speak of the matter to her?" he said softly.

I shrugged. I wasn't going to let him get any change out of me.

"Anyhow, it's a triumph for you," he said graciously. "Allow me to congratulate you!"

Was there a faint ring of irony in his words? In either case, I never felt less triumphant. What booted it to return her jewels if I had broken her heart? I bowed my acknowledgment. As he left he said:

"Come and see me sometimes, though the case is closed. You are too valuable a man for me to lose sight of."

I bowed again, mutely registering a resolve to ask him a thumping figure if ever he should require my services.

Meanwhile I had the reporters to deal with. I have a strong liking for the boys. As a class, they are the most human lot of fellows I know. They do not make the rotten conditions of their business; but they certainly are the devil to deal with when they get you on the defensive. They spread through the hotel like quicksilver, bribing the bell-boys, the maids, and even the waiter who brought up my dinner. If we had not been on the eleventh story, I should have expected to find them peeping in at the windows.

I did not dare to see them myself. In my anomalous position, they would have made a monkey of me. In my mind's eye I could see the story of the mysterious stranger who claimed to represent Miss Hamerton, and all the rest of it.

I had to take every precaution, too, to keep them from that fool of a Mrs. Bleecker. I carefully drilled the doctors in what they should say and then sent them down to their fate. They came off better than I expected. Of course, some lurid tales appeared next day, but they were away beside the mark. Nothing approaching the truth was ever published.

A little before five o'clock everybody had gone, and I was alone in the sitting-room, gazing out of the window and indulging in sufficiently gloomy thoughts, when I heard the door behind me open. I turned with a sigh, expecting fresh complaints and demands from the old haridan; but there was Irma trying to smile at me.

She was wearing a white negligee affair that made her look like a fragile lily. She walked with a firm step, but her face shocked me. It looked dead. The eyes, open, were infinitely more ghastly than when I had laid her down with them closed.

Mrs. Bleecker and the maid followed, buzzing around her. She seemed to have reached the limit of her patience with them.

"Let me be!" she said, as sharply as I ever heard her speak. "I am perfectly well able to walk and to speak. Please go back to the bedroom. I have business to discuss with Mr. Enderby."

They retired, bearing me no love in their hearts.

"I must go away, quite by myself," she said, speaking at random. "Can you help me to find a place, some place where nobody knows me? If I do not get away from these people, they will drive me mad!"

"I will find you a place," I said.

"Perhaps I'd better not go alone," she went on. "If I could only find the right

kind of person! I'm so terribly alone. That nice girl that you brought into the company—Miss Farrell—do you think she would go with me?"

There was something in this more painful than I can convey.

"She'd jump at the chance," I replied brusquely.

"You have been so good to me!" she said.

"You can say that?" I cried, greatly astonished.

"Oh, I've not quite taken leave of my senses," she said bitterly. "If I had not known the truth, it would have been much worse!" This struck me as extraordinary generosity in a woman who loved. "I—I have something else to ask of you," she added in the piteous, beseeching way that made me want to cast myself at her feet.

"Anything," I murmured.

"Mr. Quarles is coming here at five o'clock. Please see him and tell him—oh, tell him anything you like, anything that will keep him from ever trying to see me again!"

I nodded.

"You had better lose no time in getting out of this," I suggested. "Can you be ready by to-morrow morning?"

"I will start packing now," she said. "It will give me something to do."

How well I understood the hideous blankness that faced her!

"Don't let those women bother you," I said. "Refer them to me."

"They mean well," she returned.

"I will answer for Miss Farrell," I told her. "She'll be here at nine to-morrow."

She started to thank me again, but I would not let her go on. I really could not stand it.

"Very well, you will see," she said with a smile and left me.

## XII

SHORTLY afterward Roland Quarles came striding down the hall. I opened the door to him. He was astonished to find a strange man in the room, for he

did not recognize me without my Faxon make-up.

"Enderby," I said, in response to his inquiring glance, "you met me here once before."

"What's this I hear down-stairs about Miss Hamerton being sick?" he demanded anxiously.

"She has had a nervous breakdown," I replied.

He was not satisfied.

"What does that mean?" he demanded. "She was quite well yesterday."

I shrugged.

"Can I see her?"

I shook my head.

"I will speak to Mrs. Bleecker, then."

"You can't see her, either."

"Who are you?" he inquired, as so many others had done.

I gave him my card, hoping that he would take the hint and save me further explanations. Not a bit of it!

"Investigator?" What does that mean—a detective?"

"Precisely."

"What's it all about?" he asked irritably. "Why are you looking at me like a policeman?"

"Look at me closely," I said.

He stared at me, angry and puzzled.

"I have seen you before—more than once." Then his face changed. "Faxon!" he cried. "Is it Faxon?"

"The same," I said.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

This parade of innocence began to exasperate me.

"Do you need to ask?" I said.

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, don't play with words!" he burst out. "Tell me what's the matter and be done with it!"

"Miss Hamerton's pearl necklace was stolen from the theater two months ago. She engaged me to recover it."

"Her pearls! Stolen!" he ejaculated, amazed. I could not have asked to see it better done.

"Do you still want me to go on?" I asked.

"Oh, drop the mystery!" he cried.  
"You fellows fatten on mystery!"

"As Faxon, in the theater, I was perfectly sincere in my friendship for you," I went on. "I liked you; but little by little, against my will, I was forced to believe that you were the thief."

This touched him, but not quite in the way I expected.

"Me? The thief?" he gasped, and suddenly burst into harsh laughter. "How did you arrive at that?"

I was no longer inclined to spare him.

"In the first place, you provoked a bet with Miss Hamerton which induced her to wear the real pearls on the night they were stolen."

His face turned grave.

"True!" he said. "I forgot that. What else?"

"On April 6 you deposited forty thousand dollars in cash in the Thirteenth National Bank."

He paled.

"Anything more?"

"Do you care to explain where you got it?" I asked.

"Not to you," he said proudly. "Go on with your story!"

"My first clue was in the cryptic letter found on the stage."

"I remember. You said you couldn't translate it."

"But I did."

"What's it got to do with me?"

"Nothing; but I found a second letter, written in the same cryptograph and about the same matters, in the pocket of your coat."

"That's a lie!" he said.

"If you want to see it, it's at my office."

"If you did find such a paper in my pocket, it was planted there!"

"I should be glad to believe that you were not the man," I said mildly.

"Spare me your assurances," he returned scornfully.

He was silent for a while, thinking over what I had told him. Slowly horror grew in his face.

"But—but this is only a devilish combination of unlucky circumstances," he stammered. "You haven't really proved anything."

"The pearls have been recovered," I said.

"Where?" he shot at me.

"In your safe."

His legs failed him suddenly. He half fell into a chair, staring at me witlessly.

"Oh, my God!" he muttered huskily.

"Those pearls *hers*!" I believe I smiled. "And you—you have told her this story?" he faltered.

"That's what I was engaged for."

"Oh, my God!" he reiterated blankly.

"What shall I do?"

His agony was genuine enough. In spite of myself, I was moved by it.

"Better go," I said. "The matter will be hushed up, of course."

"Hushed up!" he cried. "Never!"

This theatrical pretense of innocence provoked me afresh.

"Come, get out," I said; "and be thankful you're getting off so easily!"

He paid no attention to me.

"I must see her!" he muttered.

"What do you expect to gain by bluffing now?" I said impatiently. "You must see that the game is up."

"I will not leave here without seeing her," he insisted with a kind of dull obstinacy.

"You have me at a disadvantage," I said bitterly. "You know I can't have you thrown out of the hotel without causing a scandal."

He scarcely seemed to hear me.

"I will go when she sends me," he muttered.

"All right — my patience is equal to yours," I told him.

So there we sat — he with his ghastly white face turned toward the door into the inner rooms, while I looked out of the window.

To make matters worse, Mrs. Bleecker came clucking in. She, knowing nothing of what had just happened, fell on Quarles's neck, so to speak, and told him



all her troubles with sidelong shots at me. He paid little attention to her, only repeating in his blank way:

"I must see Irma!"

"Of course!" Mrs. Bleecker cackled. "I'll tell her you're here."

"Mrs. Bleecker, as a friend I advise you not to interfere," I said sternly.

She went out, angrily flouncing her skirts at me.

To my surprise, Miss Hamerton presently came in. I cannot say what led her to do it. Perhaps she was hoping against hope that Quarles could defend himself. There was no sign of weakness in her now. Her face was as composed as marble. Mrs. Bleecker did not return.

"Irma," he cried, "send this fellow away!"

I made haste to go, but she kept me.

"Mr. Enderby must stay," she said.

"He is your friend," she added.

He made a gesture of utter despair. A hideous silence descended on the three of us.

"You asked to see me," she said at last.

"Irma, do you believe this of me?" he cried, like a soul out of hell.

"I am willing to hear anything you have to say," she murmured.

"What does evidence matter?" he pleaded. "Do you believe me capable of such a thing?"

"Am I not forced to?" she returned in a low voice.

His head dropped. I never saw such hopeless wretchedness in a man's face. I felt like an executioner.

"Speak up, Mr. Quarles!" I said sharply. "We are sincerely anxious to believe in you."

He shook his head.

"It doesn't matter," he said in a stifled voice. "I doubt if I could clear myself. Anyway, I sha'n't try. It—it is killed!" He bent a look of fathomless reproach on her. "Good-by, Irma," he said quietly. "I'm glad I was the means of your getting your jewels back. I never knew they had been stolen."

This to me was the purest exhibition of cheek I had ever met with. I was hard put to it to keep my hands off the man. If she had not been there—

He went; and when I turned around Irma had gone back into the next room. I was angry through and through, and yet—and yet—a nagging little doubt teased me.

So ended, as I thought, the case of the blue pearls. Little did I suspect what was on the way!

### XIII

THE following day was a blue one for me. Deprived of all the exciting activities of the past few weeks, I was at a loss what to do with myself. Moreover, I was dissatisfied with the result of those activities. I had won out, so to speak, but my client had not. For her only tragic unhappiness had come of it.

Meanwhile a little inner voice continued to whisper that I had *not* got to the bottom of the case. I could not put that young fellow's amazed and despairing face out of my mind. It did not fit into the theory of his guilt. On top of it all, I had had a quarrel with Sadie the night before.

About noon my uncomfortable thoughts were broken into by the entrance of Sadie herself, with storm-signals flying—to wit, a pair of flashing blue eyes and a red flag hoisted in either cheek. I had supposed that she was already on her way to Amityville with Miss Hamerton, where they were to stay at a sanatorium conducted by a doctor friend of mine.

Before I could speak, she exploded like a bomb in my office.

"Ben, you've been a fool!"

"Eh?" I said, blinking and looking precious like one, I expect.

She repeated it with amplifications.

"So you said last night," I remarked.

"But I hadn't seen her then."

"Aren't you going to the country?" I asked, hoping to create a diversion.

"Yes, at two o'clock; but I had to see you first."



"To tell me what you thought of me?"

"To beg you to do something."

"What is there to do?"

"You have made a hideous mistake! Ruined both their lives!"

I may have had my own doubts, but it wouldn't have been human to confess them in the face of an attack like this.

"Easy, there!" I said sulkily. "Have you discovered any new evidence?"

"Oh, evidence!" she cried scornfully. "I know he *couldn't* have stolen her pearls, and in your heart you know it, too."

"Sorry," I returned sarcastically, "but in conducting my business I have to consult my head before my heart."

"I know it!" she said bitterly. "That's why you've been a fool."

"Well, next time I'll consult a clairvoyant."

"Oh, don't try to be clever—it's too dreadful. If you had seen her! She will never act again. And he! He will probably kill himself, if he hasn't done it already."

This struck a chill to my breast. Sadie had an intuitive sense that I could not afford to despise. At the same time, having been called a fool, I couldn't back down.

"I don't see what better thing he can do," I remarked defiantly.

"You can say that?" she said, aghast.

"You don't mean it."

A very real jealousy made me hot. That handsome young blackguard had all the women with him.

"Are you in love with him, too?" I asked sarcastically.

It was a mistake. She had me there.

"You're doing your best to make me," she retorted.

"What are you abusing *me* for?" I complained. "I did no more than what I was engaged to do."

"She was distracted!" said Sadie. "She couldn't think for herself. She depended on you."

"Well, I did the best I could for her," I argued doggedly. "You seem to think

that I enjoyed doing it. There is a perfect case against him."

"There is not!" she said quickly.

"Your own evidence, which you set such store by, is full of holes."

I invited her to point out the gaps.

"One of your points against him is that he lately came into possession of a lot of money, presumably the proceeds of the theft. Yet you found the pearls on him, too. One fact contradicts the other."

"How do I know what other activities he's been engaged in?"

"You do not believe that!"

"I beg your pardon," I said stiffly.

"Permit me to know my own beliefs."

"If it wasn't true, it wouldn't anger you."

"I am not angry," I asserted, smiling in order to prove it.

"How can I talk to you if you act like such a child?" cried Sadie.

"Never mind my actions. Stick to his."

"You know very well that he could not have carried out several successful robberies without a lot of experience. His whole life gives the lie to that. Have we not gone into every part of it?"

"I know I found the pearls on him," I said doggedly. "They could not very well have been planted in a locked drawer in his own safe. He did not even claim that they were."

"And that cryptogram," she went on, ignoring my argument. "I mean the first one. It didn't say so in so many words, but the inference was unmistakable that Miss Hamerton's pearls had been disposed of, and that part of the proceeds was waiting for the thief. How do you account for that?"

I did not try to account for it. I pooh-poohed it.

"He convicted himself," I insisted.

"We invited him, we begged him to explain, and he could not."

"Would not, you mean!"

"What's the difference?"

She favored me with an extraordinary glance of scorn.

"And you set up to understand human nature!"

"Well, let me have your understanding of it," I said sarcastically.

"He was in love with her," said Sadie. "I suppose you don't question that?"

"No; strange as it seems, I believe he was in love with her."

"That makes goose-eggs of all your fine reasoning! Reason all night, and it wouldn't make sense. He might have stolen anybody else's pearls, but never hers. It was she who wronged love in believing that he could. To find out that she suspected him killed his love dead. Losing that, what did he care about his reputation? If he does away with himself, it will be not because he was accused of a theft, but because she killed his trust in her, and he doesn't care to live without it."

I listened to all this with an affected smile of superiority, but it reached me. Every word that the unhappy Quarles had uttered fitted in with Sadie's theory.

"Suppose some one accused you of stealing Miss Hamerton's purse to buy me a present," she went on, artfully changing her tone. "I should make a tremendous virtuous fuss, of course; but in my heart I couldn't love you any less, though you might not have the sense to know it. But if they said you had stolen my purse to buy me something, how I should laugh! It's too silly for words."

I was rapidly weakening, but it was confoundingly hard to own up.

"The same with this case. You think I'm in love with Quarles because I defend him. That's just like a man! The truth is that what hurts me is to see you deceive yourself and then look so righteous about it."

She was wielding a double-edged sword.

"But if the woman who loves him was deceived, surely I have some excuse," I said meekly.

"That's the weakness of her character—or the penalty of her position, whichever you like. She is so surrounded by

flattery and meanness that it has taught her to suspect even her lover."

"But how did the pearls get into his safe?" I asked, begging for mercy.

"I don't know. It's a mystery. I'm only trying to show you that you haven't solved the mystery yet." Once more she changed her tone, the witch! "I'm so keen to have you make a great success of the case, Ben! And I want to help a little."

That completed the rout of my forces.

"Sadie darling," I cried, "in my heart I feel the same as you. I would have given in at once if you hadn't begun by slapping my face!"

There was a little private interlude here. Boss and operative were momentarily lost sight of.

"Now let's get to work!" I said.

"I hope it's not too late!" she returned sadly.

#### XIV

I HASTENED down to Quarles's rooms near Gramercy Park. I found his old housekeeper in tears, and a glimpse beyond her showed me that the place was partly dismantled. I found that she was half-heartedly packing.

She did not know me without my Faxon make-up, and refused any information. I suspected that she had been forbidden to speak. However, by adroit and sympathetic questioning, and because the poor old soul was bursting with her troubles, it finally came out with a rush. She thought her master had lost his mind, he had acted so strangely; but such was her awe of him that she had not dared to question his commands.

All night long he had paced his bedroom and sitting-room, pausing only to burn papers and cherished mementoes in the grate. When she had risen from her bed and timidly inquired if he was ill, he had harshly ordered her back to her room. There she had lain trembling until morning, grieving because she thought she had offended him.

He had left his breakfast untasted.

Afterward he had called her to him. In a voice and manner totally unlike his own, he had announced that he was going away, and had given her instructions that terrified her. His furniture was to be sent to an auctioneer's under an assumed name, and was to be put up on the first sale day. She was to keep what it brought in lieu of wages. His clothes were to be sent to the Salvation Army. His jewelry and knickknacks she might sell or keep, as she chose.

On second thoughts he had written out his instructions in the form of a letter to her, in case any of her acts should be questioned. He had then called a taxi from the stable he usually patronized, and had departed without any baggage. This last fact alarmed her more than all the rest.

What she told me read fatally clear; but I was careful to make light of it to the grief-stricken old woman. I assumed an authority to which she willingly deferred. I ordered her to put the rooms in order, and not to make any other move until she heard from me again.

She was vastly cheered. What she dwelt on most tragically was the necessity of sending all Quarles's beautiful suits to the ragged crew who profited by the Salvation Army's benefactions.

I found out from the taxi stable that Quarles had been driven to the Pennsylvania Station. I got hold of his driver, a man whom he had frequently employed. The chauffeur had remarked the young actor's strange appearance this morning. On reaching the station Quarles had asked the porter who opened the cab door what time the next train left for Baltimore. On learning that he had but three minutes to catch it, he had thrust a bill into the driver's hand and rushed away.

This had happened at ten o'clock; it was now nearly one. I had the same driver carry me to the station, where I telephoned Sadie, snatched a bite to eat, and caught the next express for the South.

It was not the most cheerful journey I have taken. I had four hours to think

over the tragic possibilities of my mistake, and it was small comfort to reflect that it was a natural mistake. With his three hours' start, Quarles had only too much time to put his unmistakable purpose into effect. My only hope was that he might instinctively be led to wait until night. Darkness has an invincible attraction for desperate souls.

Arriving in Baltimore, I had the whole wide city to choose from, and not a clue. There was no chance of anybody's having marked him in the crowd that left the train there. However, I happened to know of a certain select hotel patronized by the élite of the profession, and I went there on a chance.

The clerk whom I saw did not know Mr. Quarles; but upon my describing the actor, he said that such a young man had been in the hotel during the afternoon. He was not registered there. The guardian of the desk recollected him because he had asked an unusual question. Did the clerk know where there was a taxidermist in town? Together they had looked up an address in the business directory, and the young man had departed. He had not returned.

I hastened to the taxidermist's, wondering greatly what could have been Quarles's errand in such a place. Casting back in my mind, I remembered having seen several little cases of mounted butterflies among his treasures. There was something pathetically innocent in the wide-open trail the young fellow was leaving behind him. This surely was no experienced criminal!

The store was kept by a benignant old man who somehow seemed to belong with the stuffed birds and pet dogs that lined the walls of his little place. I also saw frames of empaled beetles and butterflies, such as I had seen in Quarles's rooms. The entire place had an Old-World look.

The old fellow was a kindly, garrulous soul who required not the slightest pressure to set him talking. Quarles, it appeared, had made quite an impression on him.

"A handsome young fellow," he said, "and such a gentleman!"

The stranger, he told me, had been attracted into his shop by the butterflies, and they had fallen into talk about butterfly-hunting, of which sport both were devotees. Quarles had finally purchased three beautiful specimens of something with a terrible Latin name.

As he was about to leave, Quarles had remarked that he was on his way out of town for a jaunt, and he had neglected to provide himself with any cyanid. It seems that cyanid is what they use to kill the insects. In all innocence the old man had furnished a vial of it, and with one more question his customer had departed. Where was there a second-hand clothes-dealer?

Cyanid of potassium, one of the deadliest of poisons! I hastened to the second-hand store with a sickness at the heart.

They remembered Quarles here, too. The story he had told was that he wanted some old clothes to wear at a masquerade. He had been furnished with a complete outfit—hat, suit, shirt, socks, and shoes.

While the things were being wrapped up, he had mentioned idly that he was a stranger in town, and had a couple of hours to kill. He wanted to know of a trolley-line that would take him out into the country. The storekeeper had recommended the Annapolis line as the pleasantest ride on a mild evening.

This had been about four o'clock, and it was now a little after six. I had gained on him a little.

I found that the cars started for Annapolis every half-hour. By good luck the car which had left at four o'clock returned while I was waiting in the station. I interviewed the conductor, who remembered Quarles. His attention had been attracted to the young actor because, although he held a ticket to Annapolis, he had suddenly risen and left the car at the Severn River bridge.

I took the six thirty car for Annapolis. The conductor told me that the station at

the bridge was used principally by summer residents, who had their motor-boats meet them at that point. At this season, early in May, there was but little business there.

It was almost dark when I got off—a balmy spring evening. It was a lonely-looking spot. There was a little settlement up a hill, with a path from the station, but I guessed that if my man had been attracted by the loneliness of the place he would not turn toward any human habitation.

I looked about. Crossing the track and climbing down to a deserted strip of beach beside the wide river, I found with my flash-light that a solitary person had gone that way before me wearing a shapeless shoe. This would surely be Quarles.

The tracks drew me along beside the river, toward its mouth, which was in view. On the other side, farther down, sparkled the lights of the Naval Academy.

Rounding a point, in a little cove hidden from the world I found the remains of a fire on the sand. The embers were still glowing. Poking among them, I found scraps of scorched felt and woolen cloth, and bits of broken glass. Here, obviously, Quarles had changed his clothes, and had destroyed the expensive garments he had been wearing. Evidently he was counting on the fact that little trouble is taken to establish the identity of a poorly dressed suicide.

The glass, no doubt, was what remained of the case of butterflies that he had bought. Some coins in the ashes added their mute testimony to his desperate intention.

I hurried on. The footprints recommenced beyond the fire, their shape somewhat altered, for he had changed his shoes with the rest. His fine shoes he must have filled with stones and thrown into the river, for I found no remains of leather in the fire.

I hoped that with the time he had spent doing all this he could not now be more than a short distance ahead of me. Unfortunately, half a minute—nay, half of



that—would be enough for him to accomplish his purpose.

I came to the main road from Baltimore to Annapolis, which crosses the Severn by another long bridge. Automobiles crossed it at intervals. Since the footprints were not continued in the sand across the road, it was clear that he had turned into it, one way or the other.

The river seemed likeliest. I started out on the bridge, dreading most of all to hear a splash just out of my reach. It was now quite dark.

Out in the middle of the bridge, close to the draw, I came upon a motionless, slouching figure with a battered hat pulled down over the face. Notwithstanding the shapeless clothes, the tall slenderness was unmistakable. He was leaning with his elbows on the guard-rail, regarding something that he held in one hand. The object caught a spark from the red light of the draw overhead. It was the vial of cyanid.

My heart bounded with relief. I was in time—but only just.

"Quarles!" I said softly.

He straightened up with a terrified, hissing intake of the breath. I turned the flash-light on myself to save lengthy explanations.

"*You!*" he said after a moment, in a low, bitter tone. "Why must you dog me here?"

"I am your friend," I replied.

He laughed.

"Friend!" he returned. "That's good!" Then his tone changed. "You'd better be on your way," he said threateningly. "I'm in no mood for fooling."

"I've been trying to overtake you since noon," I said, merely to be saying something. An instinct told me that there was nothing like a little conversation to let down a desperate man.

"Why, in Heaven's name?" he demanded. "What good am I to you now?"

"I no longer believe you guilty."

"I don't care a tinker's curse what you believe!"

"I want you to help me find the thief."

"It's nothing to me who took the pearls. She's got 'em back again. You'd better go on. I won't stand for any interference."

"You won't do it now," I said.

"Won't I?"

He made a move to uncork the little vial. I struck his wrist, and it fell to the ground. We searched for it frantically in the dark. I had the light, and I saw it first. I put my heel on it, and ground the fragile, deadly thing into the planks of the bridge floor. He cursed me.

"There is still the water," I said.

"I'm a swimmer," he said sullenly.

"I couldn't go down. I meant to climb on the rail and take the stuff, so that it would look like drowning. But there are plenty of ways!"

"Be a man and *live!*" I said.

He laughed again.

"There's nothing in that cant for a man who's sick of the game."

"Live for her sake," I hazarded. "She loves you!"

"You've mistaken your job, old man," he said with grim amusement. "You ought to be a playwright. Write her a play. She's a great actress. Yah, I'm sick of it! Love? There's no such thing—not in women! This is real, anyhow."

I had got him talking. Something told me that the crisis was past. I took a new tack.

"She certainly has treated you badly," I said. "I don't wonder you're sore. I know just how you feel."

He turned on me with clenched fist and a furious command to be silent.

"It's no confounded policeman's business what I feel!"

"Revenge is sweet," I murmured.

It brought him up all standing. In the dark I heard him breathing quickly.

"Do you want to crawl away like a cur and die in a hole?" I asked.

"Why can't you let me alone?" he said fretfully. "What do you want to drag me back for?"



I saw that I had him going now.

"Make her suffer," I urged. "The most perfect revenge in the world is yours if you want it, because she loves you."

"What are you getting at?"

"Prove your innocence to her."

"I doubt if I could," he said weakly.

"I shouldn't know how to begin. I seem to be caught in a net."

"I am offering to help you."

"What's your game?" he demanded suspiciously.

"I've made a serious mistake," I said.

"I've got my professional reputation to think of. Besides, I'm only human. I don't want to have your untimely end on my conscience."

"It needn't be. I'm my own master."

I decided to risk all on one throw. I laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Look here," I said frankly, "you and I are not strangers. We took to each other from the first, though I happened to be wearing a disguise. I have suffered deeply all day. Forgive me my part in yesterday's affair, and be my friend. Friendship isn't such a common thing, in spite of all the talk about it. I should think you'd recognize the real article when it's offered to you."

"Rubbish!" he grumbled. "I don't believe in friendship. I have never had a real friend." But he didn't shake my hand off.

"Try me!"

"Oh, well, you've spoiled it for tonight, anyway. I'll listen to what you've got to say. Where can we go? I haven't a cent—nothing but these filthy rags."

"That's a trifle," I said joyfully. "I'll find a place!"

## XV

WE walked on across the bridge into the town of Annapolis. First I took Roland to a lunch-room and commanded him to eat. I had a time getting him to swallow the first mouthful; but that once down, he developed a ravenous appetite. I suppose he had not eaten in thirty hours.

It was comical to see how, with a stomachful of hot food inside him, a certain zest in living renewed itself. The more his resolution weakened, the more loudly and cynically he inveighed against life. But he had a sense of humor. He suddenly became conscious of the absurdity of his attitude, and we began to laugh together.

From that moment he was safe, and he was mine. There is nothing to cement a friendship like laughter.

Afterward I got a room in an obscure hotel. Roland sat down on the edge of the bed and proceeded to give me his version of the matters that perplexed me so. In the middle of a sentence he fell over and slept like a dead man. I stole out and telegraphed Sadie, at Amityville, that I had found him in time, and that he was safe and sound.

Returning, I sat by the hour watching him. My heart was soft for the human creature whom I had snatched from the brink. He looked very boyish and appealing as he lay sleeping. He seemed years younger than I. I cannot tell you how glad I was to think that there was warmth in the young body and sentience under the shut lids.

Shortly after midnight he awoke as suddenly and thoroughly as he had fallen asleep. Then he wanted to talk. Indeed, he was bursting with talk. I swallowed my yawns and set myself to listen. I let him tell the story in his own way, asking no questions.

For a long time I listened to what I already knew—the tale of his jealous, hopeless passion for Irma Hamerton. Sometimes he had suspected that she inclined toward him, but it seemed preposterous to ask her to give up her profession for him. On the other hand, he knew he could not endure sharing his wife with the public. He had decided to go away without speaking—and then the miraculous legacy had dropped from the skies.

"Tell me all about that," I commanded.

"I promised not to tell," he said reluctantly.

"This is a matter of life and death. Why was a promise exacted?"

"To avoid publicity."

"There will be none," I promised. "I pledge myself to guard the secret as well as you could."

"I destroyed the letter I got, with the others," he said; "but I read it so often that I can give it to you almost word for word."

"Too bad it was destroyed!"

"Oh, you can verify the contents by the Amsterdam Trust Company, who paid me the money."

"But if you have a clear case, what did you run away for?" I asked, amazed.

"You will never understand," he said with a wry smile. "When I saw that Irma believed I was capable of robbing her, I seemed to die at that moment. What did I care about my case?"

Hearing that, my opinion of Sadie's perspicacity went up marvelously.

"Go on!" I said.

I took down the letter from his dictation. It was written, he said, on expensive note-paper, without address, crest, or seal, in a large and somewhat old-fashioned feminine hand.

DEAR MR. QUARLES:

Although you have never heard of me, I think of you as my dearest friend. I have followed your career from the time of your first appearance on the stage. I am one of those unfortunates who, condemned to live, are cut off from life. I watch life pass from behind my iron screen. It is you, who, all unconscious, have supplied me with a dream to cheat my emptiness. I have warmed my cold hands at your fire.

Now they tell me my release is at hand. I wish to show my gratitude to you in the only way that is possible to me. An artist's career is difficult and uncertain. I want to remove a little of the uncertainty from yours.

I must avoid giving rise to silly gossip, which would grieve my relatives. To avoid the publicity of probate I am making secret arrangements beforehand. An old friend will carry out my wishes for me when I am gone.

The doctors give me a week longer. Upon my death this letter will be mailed to you. You will then hear from the Amsterdam Trust Com-

pany that a sum of money awaits your order. You will never know my name; but if you should let even the bare facts become known, some busybody would eventually connect them with my name, and unhappy gossip result. Therefore I ask you, as a man of honor, to keep the whole transaction locked in your breast.

"That is all," said Roland. "It was signed: 'Your grateful friend.'"

"Did you look in the recent obituaries for a clue?" I asked.

"Yes," he confessed. "There was none."

"Go ahead with your story. We'll return to the letter later."

"At first I thought it was a hoax," he resumed; "but sure enough, in two or three days I received a letter from the trust company, asking me to call. I saw the president. He said that the sum of forty thousand dollars had been deposited with them, to be turned over to me in cash. He said it had been bequeathed to me by one who desired to remain unknown. He said that he himself did not know who my benefactor was. He had dealt with a lawyer. He said that there was but one condition attached to the legacy—that I would give my word never to speak of the matter. I had met this Mr. Ambler, the president, and he had seen me act, so there was no difficulty about identifying me. I left his office carrying the money, and carried it to my own bank to deposit. That is all there is to that."

"Good!" I said. "The Amsterdam Trust Company is a solid institution, and the president a well-known man. They will still be there, if we need them."

"It mustn't get into the newspapers," Quarles said nervously.

"Trust me for that. I'm not going to make you break your word. Now about the bet you made with Miss Hamerton."

He winced at the sound of her name.

"There's no more in that than appears on the surface," he said irritably. "I couldn't have told the paste from the genuine. I wanted to give her a box of gloves; but she never claimed them, and I forgot about it."

"The cryptogram you have already explained," said I.

"I did not know there was such a paper in my pocket. Hold on!" he cried suddenly. "About that bet—I have just remembered that I once had a talk about precious stones—pearls—with a man in the company."

"Milbourne?"

"Sure! How did you know?"

"I believe he took the necklace; but it's going to be a job to prove it."

"It was just a trifling conversation," Roland resumed, thinking hard. "I can't remember exactly. He remarked the beauty and oddity of Ir—of Miss Hamerton's pearls. I think he said he hoped that she did not risk wearing real ones on the stage. That may have been to find out if I knew they were artificial. I told him she did not wear the real gems. There was more talk. He seemed to know about pearls, and I believe I asked him how to tell the real from the artificial. I never thought of it then, but looking back I see that it may have been that talk which gave me the idea of making a bet with her. Oh, I have been a fool!"

"This is all interesting," I said, "but it doesn't give us anything solid to go on. Now for the main thing. How did the real pearls get into your safe?"

Roland struck his forehead.

"I have been everybody's dupe!" he groaned.

"It's a part we all have to play occasionally," I said soothingly. "Go ahead!"

"About this time I began to get circular letters from a firm of jewelers called Jones & Sanford, with an address on Maiden Lane, where all the jewelers used to be. They were facsimile letters, very well written."

"The kind that are made to look like personal letters, but, like false teeth, seldom deceive anybody?"

"Precisely. I got one every few days. They were all to the effect that the writers, as brokers, were prepared to sell

precious stones at prices much under those asked by the big jewelers. There was a lot of rigmarole about saving on overhead charges, interest on valuable stocks, and so on—about what you would expect in such letters. There were a lot of imposing-looking references, too. At first I paid no attention to the letters; precious stones didn't interest me. But when I got all that money I began to read them. You see, I—I wanted to make Irma a present, and I knew she loved pearls better than anything else in the world."

I let out a whistle of astonishment.

"Do you mean to say you *bought* Miss Hamerton's pearls with the idea of presenting her with them, to add to her collection?"

He nodded shamefacedly.

"I must have done. Of course, I didn't know she had been robbed."

"How long had you had them?"

"Just a few days."

He told me that he had asked Miss Hamerton to marry him, and intended the necklace for a wedding-gift if she consented.

"Well, you *were* a downy bird!" I exclaimed.

"Wait till I tell you," he said. "They were a slick pair! You might have been taken in yourself."

"Did they know you?" I asked, still full of amazement.

"Certainly. I paid for the pearls with a check—a certified check."

"Which they cashed within half an hour?"

"Perhaps. I never inquired."

"Sold Miss Hamerton's pearls back to Miss Hamerton's leading man!" I cried. "My boy, we have something out of the common in crooks to deal with!"

"They had a well-furnished suite on an upper floor of a first-class office-building," he resumed. "I was there three or four times. I saw other customers coming and going. Everything was business-like and looked all right. Even the stenographer had a prim, New England

air. They showed me all kinds of precious stones. I bit at the pearls, because I recognized that they were the same kind Irma had. They asked eight thousand dollars for them."

"You knew, didn't you, that Miss Hamerton's necklace was worth much more than that?"

"Yes; but I had been told that hers were very fine and perfect. I supposed these to be not quite so good."

"And so you paid your money on a chance and took them home?"

"Not quite so fast as that. The jewelers seemed to take it as a matter of course that I would have the pearls examined by an expert before purchasing. They suggested that I should take them up to Dunsany's."

"Dunsany's!" I repeated, amazed.

"Yes. Wasn't that enough to lull suspicion? Dunsany's is more than a jewelry-store; it's a national institution."

"But you never took them there?"

"Indeed I did," was the surprising answer. "Jones & Sanford's clerk went with me. We saw Mr. Frear, the firm's expert on pearls."

I whistled again. Frear, the man at Dunsany's to whom I had told my little story of the fiction-writer, and who had looked so queer when I mentioned blue pearls!

"Large gentleman, elegantly dressed, with a face like a boiled dumpling?"

"Sure!" cried Roland. "Do you know him, too?"

"Go on with your story," I said.

"Mr. Frear examined the pearls and told me they were genuine and of good quality. He valued them at about twelve thousand dollars."

"The deuce he did!" I cried. "This case is spreading wider and wider. Frear is in the gang, too. To think of their having an ally in Dunsany's!"

"How do you know they have?"

"Because Frear, like everybody else in the trade, had been informed that the only necklace of blue-black pearls in the world had been stolen. He knew, more-

over, that it was worth—" But here prudence stopped my tongue.

"Worth what?" asked Roland.

"Well, much more than twelve thousand dollars."

"The only blue pearls in the world?" he said, puzzled.

"There's a lot about this necklace that you don't know," I said, smiling. "All in good time! Go on with your story!"

"Well, that's all, isn't it?" said he.

"At least, you know the rest. Why, these fellows were so careful of details, you will even find their imprint in gold inside the case—Jones & Sanford, such and such a number Maiden Lane."

"H-m! I have a case on my hands now!" I said meditatively. "It may take me six months or more to clean this up!"

"I'll work at it with you," Quarles volunteered.

"My dear fellow, I like you better every minute," I said, smiling at him; "but you'd make the worst detective in the world."

"Oh, well, perhaps I would," he said.

"There's no need for you to await the outcome of the case," I said. "We have the evidence right in hand to clear you. I'll lay it before Miss Hamerton to-morrow morning."

My young friend surprised me again. He leaped up with his dark eyes positively blazing.

"You'll do nothing of the kind!" he cried passionately. "That affair is done—done forever. If you interfere, I won't be responsible for the consequences. She has her pearls back. Let her be. My time will come when she reads in the newspapers about the capture and the trial of the real thieves."

## XVI

BACK in New York, the next day, I made haste to get to work on the half-dozen clues with which Roland had furnished me.

I may say, in passing, though the visit had no important results, that I called on Mr. Ambler of the Amsterdam Trust



Company. At first he declined to give me any information whatever; but when I hinted that a certain serious suspicion rested on Quarles, he corroborated Roland's story as far as he knew it. He declined to give me the name of the attorney who had brought the money to the bank.

"My confirmation of Mr. Quarles's story should be amply sufficient to clear him," he said, with the dignified air of a bank president.

"Undoubtedly," I said, bowing, and left.

Since there appeared to be no immediate connection between Roland's legacy and the theft of the pearls, I let that go for the present.

I went to the address of the jewelers on Maiden Lane, but found, as I expected, that the birds had flown. An irate renting-agent aired his opinion of Messrs. Jones & Sanford, but could give me no information of their whereabouts. They had leased the offices for a year, and after five weeks' tenancy had quietly moved out.

"Don't you ask references from prospective tenants?" I asked.

"They gave first-rate references," he mourned.

I took down the names of their references for future use. One of them was Mr. Frear, of Dunsany & Co.

My next call was upon Mr. Alfred Mount, in his office behind the store of exquisite fashion. His greeting, while polite, was slightly cooler than of yore. As a man of the world, I felt that I was expected to gather from it that our relations were now at an end. It warned me to be wary. I was already on my guard, because I knew that Mount hated Roland Quarles and hoped to profit by his disgrace.

"Anything new?" he asked casually.

"Yes—and no," I said. "I am not satisfied that we have got quite to the bottom of our case."

"Do we ever get quite to the bottom of anything?" Mount suggested.

"I do not believe that Quarles was alone in this," I said as a feeler.

"What makes you think so?" he asked quickly.

"Nothing definite," I replied; "just a feeling."

Mount only shrugged.

"I believe that expert jewel-thieves made a tool of him," I went on.

"It is possible," said Mount, looking bored.

"If so, it is much to the interest of your business to have them run down and put out of the way. I have come to ask for your cooperation."

"My dear sir," Mount replied with his indulgent, worldly smile, "the world is full of trouble. I do not try to escape my share. I face it like a man, or as near like a man as I can; but I never go searching for more. We have by your skill recovered the jewels. To me, the reasons for not pursuing the matter any further are obvious. Better let well enough alone!"

I appeared to give in to him.

"Perhaps you're right. I thought I saw a chance to earn a little glory."

"There will be plenty of opportunities for that," he said affably. "You can count on me."

We parted in friendly fashion. So much for Mr. Alfred Mount! At least, he would never be able to say later that I had not given him his chance.

I went straight to the magnificent marble building which houses the establishment of Dunsany & Co. and asked boldly for Mr. Walter Dunsany, great-grandson of the founder of the house and its present head. I was admitted without difficulty, and I found him a jeweler and a man of affairs of a type very different from the gentleman whom I had just interviewed.

Mr. Dunsany was a simple, unassuming man, direct and outspoken. I was strongly attracted to him, and I may say without vanity that he seemed to like me. From the first he trusted me more than I had any right to expect.



At this time he was a man of about forty-five, somewhat bald, and beginning to be corpulent, but with a humorous, eager, youthful glance. He glanced up from my card with a whimsical smile.

"'Confidential investigator'? More trouble, I suppose!"

"I'm afraid so," I said. "Have you an employee named Frear, an expert on pearls?"

"I had until a few days ago." An exclamation of disappointment escaped me. "What's the matter with Frear?" Mr. Dunsany asked.

"I suppose you don't know where he is now?"

"On his way back to Holland, I suppose. He came from there ten years ago. Why?"

"One more question first. I am assuming that you know that a certain famous necklace of blue pearls has been stolen?"

"Mount's pearls? Certainly. Everybody in the trade was advised."

"You are sure that Frear knew of it?"

"Certainly. It was his business first."

"Yet that necklace was brought into your store a week or so ago by a man who was considering the purchase of it. He submitted it to Frear, who pronounced the stones genuine, and said that the necklace was worth about twelve thousand dollars."

Mr. Dunsany jumped up and paced the room agitatedly.

"Frear!" he exclaimed. "Impossible! You are sure of your facts?"

I described the operations of Messrs. Jones & Sanford.

"Not impossible, I suppose," he said more quietly. "This sort of thing has happened to me before. I doubt if there was ever a time when I was not harboring some thief or another. They never steal from me, you understand. They are the pickets, the outposts, who watch where the jewels go, and report to headquarters. But Frear! He had been with me for ten years. He had an instinct for pearls!"

"Headquarters?" I said eagerly. "Then you agree with me that there is an organized gang at work?"

"That's no secret," he said. "Every jeweler knows that there is a kind of corporation of jewel-thieves. It is probably ten years old, and better organized and administered than our own association."

"Why don't you break it up?"

"Break it up!" he echoed. "It is my dearest ambition! There has seldom been a meeting of our association but what I have urged with all my eloquence that we should get together and break up the thief trust. The others will not support me. Everybody suspects that he has spies in his establishment—perhaps, like Frear, in a responsible position. The crooks seem to have us where they want us. They have never robbed us, you see. There is a sort of unwritten agreement—you leave us alone, and we'll leave you. The other men in the association say: 'If our customers are careless with their jewels, we are not responsible.' But I say we are! These crooks have put us in a position where, if we do not go after them, we may be said to be in league with them."

"Mr. Mount is a member of the association, I suppose?"

"Mount? Oh, yes; he's the president. To give Mount credit, I must say that he has always supported me in this matter, though not so warmly as I would have liked. But I am considered a fanatic."

"Why don't you and he do it together?" I asked.

"He won't go into it without the backing of the association."

"Why don't you go it alone?" I said. "You are powerful."

He glanced at me sharply.

"I will when I see my way," he replied. "Such police-officers and detectives as have happened to come under my observation have not seemed to me the right men for the job. When I find my man—"

"Will you consider me as an applicant for the job?" I asked quietly.

He studied me hard.

"I should be difficult to satisfy," he warned me.

"First of all, you would like to have references," I said. There were some good men who backed me, and I gave him their names.

"How about Mount?" he asked.

"I have already applied to him for the job," I said frankly, "and was turned down. He is satisfied with the recovery of the pearls. As long as he has refused

to go in, I think it would be better not to let him know about our plans. That, however, is up to you."

"I shall not let him know," Mr. Dunsany said briefly.

To make a long story short, I succeeded in satisfying Mr. Dunsany of my fitness to undertake the matter in hand. We concluded a defensive and offensive alliance, and decided to move against the enemy at once.

(To be continued in the October number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)



# Imitation

by  
Suzanne  
Buck



"ALL the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

So said a certain deceased poet, and with the observation he handed down to posterity a tabloid philosophy. For look you—repeat that line, and you will visualize instantly this universal stage with its mortal props and its shifting scenery; and if you go beneath the tinsel which tries so hard to be what it is not, and seek underneath the paint of affectation and sham, you will find the thin, almost wholly submerged stratum of truth without which no fabric of lies can long endure. Then out of your conviction you will add:

"Life is a vanity, and imitation is its watchword."

On that avenue where the limousine

stops before the door of the dressmaker, the *corsétier*, and the milliner, and each dressmaker, each *corsétier*, and each milliner is a star in his particular line, stars of lesser magnitude pass afoot. They see and hear, and later imitate, the ways of those who by the grace of God and Mammon are among the mighty ones of earth.

There a dozen throbbing arteries of New York merge into one broad channel of sight and sound, of life and motion. At four o'clock on any afternoon it is flood-time for the city incarnate.

On a brilliant day in late October, when the cunning hand of art had colored that street in all the glory of autumn shades, and the greens and browns and blues of seasonable hats and furs and frocks cast a multicolored charm over handsome eyes

and flashing teeth, there came, swept along on the high crest of the pulsing tide, like a wind out of the west, the tall, svelt, seal-coated, beaver-hatted figure of the fashionable Mrs. J. W. Baird.

Three years before Mrs. Baird had been Gertie Furlong of the "Only Girl" company. Prior to that she had sold hats in one of the avenue's millinery-shops. But of all these earlier experiences no record was written in her fragrant, exquisite, exotic presence.

There were poise and breeding in her richly clad person. There was self-containment in every line of her perfect face. So much for woman's chameleon capacity!

Out of the east, floating with the current, came the trim, stylishly cloaked figure of Mrs. Norman Strang, who five years before, when she was Lillie Harris, had sold hats in the same shop with Gertie Furlong. Mrs. Strang, too, was tall and slim, but she was brown-haired and brown-eyed. Even in the days of the millinery-shop, she had been counted noticeably good-looking.

To-day, however, her coat was only near-seal, and it showed signs of wear around the edges. Her small, close-fitting hat sat tight to her head with that conformity which comes from constant use.

Where a mountain of a man in brass buttons with an authoritative wave of his hand stemmed the tide at a busy corner and passed the cross-current of its humanity through, they met, these two, and their recognition was simultaneous.

Mrs. Baird laid her hand on Lillie Strang's arm and drew her aside, out of the human torrent. The move brought them right up against the plate-glass window of the avenue's smartest shop, where a gorgeous woman of waxen mien and frozen smile was seated comfortably on a pillowed divan in a Louis Quinze boudoir. There, against the transparent wall of her room, they stood with complete disregard for aught but each other.

Unmistakable admiration for Gertie Furlong Baird shone in Lillie's dark-brown eyes.

"Gertie, you beauty!" she breathed. "You're the best-dressed woman on the avenue!"

There was nothing of envy in her voice. She made a statement of facts foregone, a sweeping résumé which should lead up to a discussion of the present.

"We all heard about you, Gertie. After you left the shop to go into the chorus, all the girls used to watch for your pictures in the Sunday supplement, and cut them out and paste them up all over the workroom. Whenever a salesman, or one of the regular customers, came in, some one of the girls was sure to say: 'You remember Gertie Furlong, don't you? The tall, slim blonde who sold so much mourning goods because she was so stunning in black herself? Well, she's on the stage now, and we all expect she'll marry some millionaire.' When we read about you in the papers, Gertie," she ran on, "we were all so proud of you!"

Lillie's brown eyes glittered in joyous excitement. She swept a lightning glance over the person of Mrs. Baird, and in that fleeting second she appraised and catalogued and ticketed everything the other woman wore with its approximate price. Yet there was nothing conscious in the process. It was simply a trick of her woman's mind.

The erstwhile Gertie Furlong sank her chin farther into her broad, fur collar and let her hand toy with the tiny gold-mesh bag which she wore, pendant fashion, around her neck, outside her sealskin coat. When her head cocked itself to one side in defiance of the wind, it made of her fashionably tilted hat a halo for the perfection of her profile.

"So you *did* see me in the papers!" Her smile was the smile of gratified vanity. "Oh, Lillie!" She spoke with more freedom than her cultivated manner of speech had permitted for a long time. "You know how crazy I was, always, for *good* things. I always wanted the best, and I always said that some day I'd have just what I wanted!" There was whimsicality in her laugh. "Don't you remember, Lillie, how

I always insisted that it was possible to get whatever you wanted, if only you wanted it hard enough?"

Mrs. Strang withdrew one hand from the recesses of her muff—a muff which was an imitation of Gertie's own, but which had in life clothed nothing more arctic than a muskrat. She laid the palm of her hand flat upon the velveteen crown of her hat, to hold it steady against the wind.

"You were so unusual, Gertie," she answered. "You always said such startling things. And you were always so splendidly good-looking! How could any one ever forget you?"

She held her hat down firmly as another gust threatened to lift it.

"Let's move over farther, Gertie. We're right in the way of the wind." Then she went on without a pause: "Don't you remember how many days, when we were errand-girls at the shop, you'd go with just a sandwich for lunch, and save your money for a bottle of imported perfume and a pair of silk stockings? *Real* stockings, you called them."

"And how I used to love to borrow that little tortoise comb you got for Christmas, just because I knew it was *real* tortoise!" supplemented Mrs. Baird eagerly.

Neither heeded the eddy of life which swirled about them and passed them by. Steering a clear course out of a jam of ceaseless car and carriage, a taxi slowed up to the curb near them and flaunted a tiny red flag in bold display. But Gertie Furlong and Lillie Harris were deep in the past, a past not five years gone.

Lillie's eyes, as they rested on Gertie, feasted on the beauty of her evenly marcelled hair, on her white gloves, and on the soft fur of her muff. Nor did her fine discrimination fail to note the orchids, exotic as Gertie's self, which were fastened to the muff with a broad platinum pin. Then her tongue made audible the thought within her mind.

"But you *have* done wonderfully well, eh, Gertie?"

Mrs. Baird's tones carried the enthusiasm of unqualified certainty.

"*Have* I? Lillie, I said I would get the best in life. I made up my mind I'd have *real* things. I wished for it, and hoped for it, and prayed for it. You remember, don't you?"

With her hand still holding down her hat, Lillie Strang nodded in token of recollection.

"Why, in the two years I was on the stage," Gertie continued, "I never for one moment forgot why I went on. For me, that was only the means to the end. I was tired of working so hard and getting so little in return!" Her voice held scorn ineffable. "Imitation lace, and near-silk, and rhinestone buckles!" Youth and beauty spoke with superb candor. "I knew I could get what I wanted. Look at me now!"

She invited inspection with all the complacency of supreme self-satisfaction. Mrs. Baird knew that in her make-up—on the exterior, at least—there was nothing wanting.

"I have the most beautiful things, Lillie," she continued enthusiastically. "And everything is *genuine*, too!"

She smothered her furs caressingly. Mrs. Baird seemed eager to rehearse the days of her lesser prosperity. Perhaps the recollection served to enhance the value of her attainment.

"Don't you remember how I hated my little pony-skin because it was such an obvious imitation, and how I'd let myself get blue with cold before I'd wear it? I always promised myself"—again her hand smoothed the fur of her coat—"that some day I'd have a *real* sealskin."

Then, as if conscious that she was committing a breach of manners by talking only of herself, she asked suddenly:

"Where do you live, Lil?" For the first time her eyes saw Lillie's value in the ratio of the dollar-mark. "You're married, too, aren't you?"

"Of course I'm married." Lillie Harris Strang answered the last question first; then, after some slight hesitation, she replied to the first. "I live over on Ninety-Sixth Street, east of the park."



"I know where." Mrs. Baird nodded in earnest comprehension. "That row of model apartment-houses—those imitation marble-front things."

There was no malice in her voice, yet a subtle but unconscious barb sped home and pierced the wall of Lillie Strang's contentment.

The brightness of the day was giving way with winter suddenness to the hard, gray gloom of the twilight which is so close to night. A million points of light were springing out of nowhere. The leisurely crowd had thinned, and the wind, unsoftened by any sun, was becoming sharper. Mrs. Baird shivered delicately in her gorgeous furs.

"Ugh, but it's getting cold! Lillie, I can't stop any longer. I have a theater engagement, and I must hurry back to the hotel to dress."

Her voice was not without an inflection of caressing quality. Gertie Furlong had always been fond of Lillie Harris.

"Let me call for you to-morrow, honey. I have a closed car. My husband gave it to me on my birthday."

She said this with conscious pride of achievement, as if the acquisition of the expensive bauble was a credit to herself and not to her husband.

"To-morrow, when I go to the *corsetier's*, I'll call and take you along." She glanced at the other woman critically. "I think your figure could be improved, Lil." Then, volubly, she added: "I want to meet your husband, and I want you to meet mine. What name did you say, Lillie? Oh, yes, Strang! I'll drive around for you at two o'clock."

With a sudden, swift, affectionate little half-embrace, Gertie Furlong Baird veered away.

## II

WHAT normal woman clothed in near-seal would have gone on undisturbed by such an encounter? Certainly not Lillie Strang. She was normal—just as normal, anyhow, as any woman may be. Her meeting with Gertie Furlong gave rise to but

one question, and that question was contained in the one word—

"Why?"

She and the woman who was now Mrs. Baird were of a height, of an age, and, she felt, had other things been equal, of equivalent charm. They had been of the one station, too; yet she wore near-seal and lived in a house which Mrs. Baird had characterized as "one of those imitation marble-front things," while the other wore real seal, carried a bouquet of orchids, and had a limousine of her own.

She disregarded, with a woman's illogicality, the most important factor in the whole case. She saw nothing significant in the circumstance that while she, like most other women, had married the man who had sought her out, Gertie had gone out of her way to wrest from the world just that to which she felt herself entitled.

When Norman Strang came home that evening, he felt something alien in his wife's attitude. Her kiss of greeting was absent, her later manner preoccupied.

With a man's blunt way of getting a reason, he asked a straightforward question.

Strang was an undemonstrative man. The fact that he had chosen Lillie for a wife he considered a sufficient proof of his affection. His was a steadfast and trustful love which manifested itself in deeds, not words. He was bending his every energy to build up a wholesale business in electrical supplies. He was tall and quietly refined, and he had a manner and a carriage which added to his dignity.

Behind his newspaper, deep in an arm-chair beside the mission table of the living-room, he meditated with head flung back against the cushions and an unlighted cigar between his teeth. Lillie, opposite, in the soft blouse and the serge skirt which she had worn all afternoon underneath her coat, was studying a magazine with elaborate inattention.

"Lillie," said Strang, after her desultory manner had held his serious gray-blue eyes for several minutes, "are you ill? You ate very little at dinner, and it seems to me



you're not so bright as you are usually. Aren't you feeling well?"

Lillie came out of her trance with a start. Tears were very close to the surface.

"I'm tired—very tired," she said in a muffled voice.

"Tired!" repeated her husband. "You work too hard, Lillie." His voice held a note of displeasure. "Why don't you get a competent maid? We can afford that, you know. It's poor economy for you to risk your health," he concluded, a little sharply.

Lillie flung the magazine from her with all the petulance of a spoiled child.

"Our maid is competent enough," she said, and rested a cheek on one hand, while the fingers of her other hand fumbled the buttons of her blouse. "I mean I'm tired of life." There was the weariness of utter discouragement in her voice. "Tired of life as *we* live it, anyhow!"

Strang straightened in his chair. His eyebrows went up in a gesture of complete surprise.

"You are *what*? Tired of life as *we* live it?" He hesitated for a moment. "It seems to me that life as we live it comes nearer being *real* life than life as I see it lived by people who have much more than we have."

"*Real*!" Lillie echoed the word as if she doubted the evidence of her ears. "Did you say *real*?" Her head flung itself back in a gesture of scornful contempt. "We have imitation marble on our house-front, and imitation rugs in our hall. We have imitation Circassian wood trimming in our dining-room, and imitation bronze ornaments in the parlor." She added a last item bitterly, as if it conclusively proved her point: "And I wear an imitation sealskin coat!"

Strang was silent. It was the woman's gibe at the quality of her coat, rather than all the patter about imitation wood and rugs and marble, which gave him the key to her mood. Strang was ten years older than his wife.

He laid aside his newspaper and crossed to her side. In the loose comfort of a

smoking-jacket, he towered above her. Lillie had sunk her head on her arm, and her face was hidden.

Strang regarded the bent brown head silently and thoughtfully for a moment. His strong, smooth-shaven jaw became set, and he pressed his lips together in a straight line of determination. Then he laid his hand on his wife's hair with a gentle, caressing gesture.

"Lil," he said slowly, "I guess that what you say is true. There is imitation marble on our house-front, and an imitation rug in the hall; and I know the Circassian wood trimming of that Dutch shelf in the dining-room is imitation, just like the bronze in the parlor. But, Lillie, are you a sham? Am I a sham?"

He paused for a second, and blinked straight ahead into vacancy as he made a mental reconnaissance. When he spoke again, a little catch disturbed the smoothness of his deep, chest voice.

"I know that it wouldn't be right, as a rule, for a man to say this to his wife, or to cast up to her the things he does for her sake. But I want you to think of something, and I must speak frankly."

The woman's face remained hidden in the crook of her arm, but her head shifted slightly. The movement left one little ear exposed.

"Did you ever stop to think, Lil," Strang went on, still speaking slowly and deliberately, "how comfortable an unmarried man with my income and no home responsibilities might live?" He failed to keep a trace of irony out of his voice. "Why, I might even have an apartment where the things you mentioned would not be so blatantly imitation as they are here. I might even have *real* rugs and *real* bronzes. But then," he added quickly, "I wouldn't have you, would I? I wouldn't have a woman who for my sake contents herself with a coat of imitation fur, and looks forward cheerfully to the time when I shall be able to provide her with better things. I wouldn't have the satisfaction of knowing that all the drudgery of my work was not without a

purpose; and I wouldn't be able to realize the genuine worth of a *real* woman."

He bent closer, and patted the dark head.

"Are you listening, Lillie?" he said gently.

A muffled sound came from beneath Lillie's arm. Strang raised his wife's head and lifted her face to his.

"Any place, however imitation the furnishing, means home to me, Lillie," he said simply, "just so long as you're there. Don't I mean as much to you?"

The sullenness of Mrs. Strang's face melted in a sob. To her softened mood, the words "genuine" and "real" took on a different meaning. Strang drew her closer.

"Don't cry, Lillie," he said. "I understand!"

### III

AFTER all, that a man and his wife should come to an understanding is a matter of every-day occurrence. It happens whether they live in a cabin built of logs, or in an apartment-house where the marble is a cheap stone masked under several shades of paint, or in a mansion where the architecture is of the costliest in every detail.

Over at the Prince Regent Hotel there is no pretense at all. Marble is marble, and no one blushes for the quality of the rugs, not even the connoisseur.

There, on the eighteenth floor, in a suite so rich, so fine, and so cunningly contrived in pink and gold as to bring out every gleam in her blond hair, every flash of her smile, Gertie Furlong Baird sat before a white dressing-table equipped with a triplicate mirror, and added to her toilet the little finishing touches which every woman knows so well how to adapt to her individual need.

"Jack!" she called, as she slithered a nail-buffer for the last time across her pink finger-tips. "Jack, I'm almost ready."

From the next room came a sound which indicated that her message had reached her husband. A moment later Jack Baird

stood on the threshold of his wife's dressing-room.

Baird was young, so young that the youthful contour of his figure mocked his gray hair; but the eyes he fixed on his wife were old and tired. He wore his dress clothes with the air of the man to whom dress clothes are a part of the daily routine.

"I'm ready, too, Gertie," he said.

He crossed the dainty pink-and-gold room, lifted a shade, and rolled it until it was on a level with the two others. It was the action of a man of nicety in habit. Then he leaned an arm on the mantel, where a "Winged Victory" in Carrara marble broke the simplicity of an Elizabethan outline, and watched his wife silently for a moment.

Mrs. Baird was coifed and dressed. She was slipping on her rings.

"I want to talk to you for a minute before we go out to-night, Gertie."

Mrs. Baird made a little gesture of impatience. She spoke without turning round. Her husband was clearly reflected in her mirror.

"Jack, we'll be late. Can't you wait until we get back? I don't want to miss the first act."

"You won't miss the first act!" Baird's answer was grim. "What I have to say won't take very long—not more than a minute or two. I only want to ask, Gertie"—he swept his hand about the place with an inclusive gesture—"when will you be tired of all this? Am I never to know what a *real* home is like?"

"*Real* home!" Gertie echoed the word with no comprehension of its deeper meaning. "Jack, this hotel is absolutely the finest in town!"

A sound, something between a laugh and a groan, escaped Jack Baird.

"Gertie," he said, as he watched her wind a filmy, gauzy length of chiffon about her neck and shoulders, "my idea in life was to get rich quick, so that with my money I could buy what I considered the *genuine* things of life. But I made a mistake, Gertie—an awful mistake!"

There was actual pain in his voice. It shook, then became steady and gathered strength.

"You're so keen for show and sham, Gertie. You want only the spices of life, and I find that, after all, I want the bread. Can't we buy a home and settle down in it?" His voice lingered lovingly on the word. "I want a *real* home—not a magnificent stopping-place where every little service must be bought!"

Mrs. Baird paid her husband very little attention. She was surveying herself critically in the mirror for the last time, and her thoughts were far from running in the direction toward which her husband's conversation tended.

"Do you like my lavalieré this way, Jack?" she asked suddenly. "I had it reset." The matter of the lavalieré had occupied her thoughts for a week. "The pearls look better in the platinum, I think." Then she glanced up at him and

added quickly: "I'm perfectly happy here. I don't understand you at all to-night."

Baird breathed a scarcely audible sigh. Then he picked up his wife's wrap and took up his own coat and stick.

"I see that you don't understand, Gertie," he said; "but I had hoped that you would."

He stepped aside to let her pass. As his eyes rested on her perfect figure clothed in a gown of green and gold, they moved down to her slippered feet, and from there traveled slowly up to the osprey in her hair. On his face there was an expression of baffled hope. The intrinsic worth of the clothes and jewels that his money had bought must have meant but little to him, for he uttered but one word—and that word, even had she heard it, must have been beyond his wife's power to understand.

"Imitation!" he muttered bitterly.

### A SONG WHILE LOVING

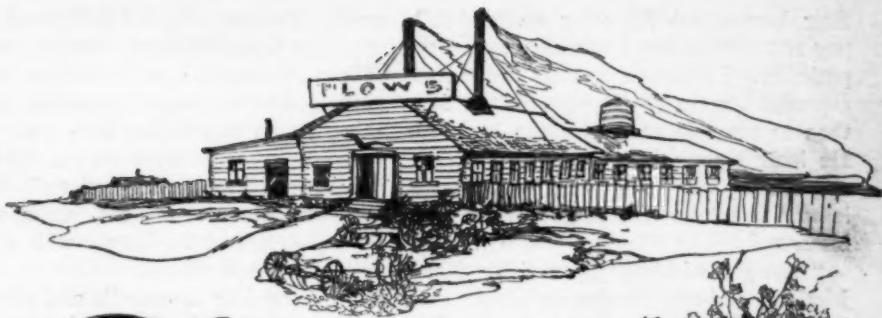
THOU who hast been as starlight in my darkness,  
Sun after blinding rain, peace after war;  
Thou who hast been, through the long ages,  
All I have waited for;  
Now, in the noon of our rapture,  
Thee I adore.

Thee I adore! Since it is through thee I harken  
To a new song in the winds that shake the trees;  
Through thee I speak a new language,  
Suffer new ecstasies;  
Yea, and through thee drain life's golden goblet  
Unto the lees.

This is the sum of my joy—that I hold you,  
Fold you at last, and in the midst of my pride  
Say: "It is she who is with me  
Here, close, close at my side!"  
Love, it is something to know when one's hour  
Is glorified!

To know, and to speak of the glory! To shout it  
Under the blue of high heaven, and say:  
"This is our moment, this is a love that is perfect;  
At last, at last we have found the way!  
Would we could show it to those still blinded!  
Love, let us pray!"

Charles Hanson Towne



# The Idler..

by R. N. Wall

THE office of the Mears Plow Works was a low-pitched, gloomy place, filled with old walnut desks and cluttered with files of yellow papers. It smelled close and musty. At a battered desk in one corner, fenced off by a rickety railing, sat Robert Shanklin, a harsh-featured man of fifty, with a close-cropped gray head and a lank frame, all knees and wrists and elbows. He looked as mildewed and moldy as the office.

Gathered about the desk were four of the five stockholders of the company. Besides Shanklin there was Lawyer Morrison, a precise man with a ribboned eyeglass; there was big Dave Meekins, the superintendent of the works, with freshly wet hair, a blue linen collar, and a mouth full of fine-cut; and there was Elizabeth Carter, whose white shirt-waist and blond head were the only high-lights in the dingy room.

"I got you all together," Shanklin was saying in his creaking voice, "to decide what to do with young Mears. He has just found out that his father owned only forty-five per cent of the stock of the Mears Plow Works."

"I judged that he was surprised when I read the old man's will," commented Morrison, placing his finger-tips together.

"Thought his father owned the whole works, did he?" put in Miss Carter, amusement in her big eyes. "Looks upon us as nothing but a bunch of 'clerks,' I suppose!"

"I disillusioned the young gentleman," said the lawyer in his precise way. "I explained to him that the business had deteriorated after his grandfather's decease, and that five years ago his father had found incorporation necessary. I informed him that we had made the capitalization one hundred thousand dollars; that Mr. Shanklin held four hundred and fifty shares, Mr. Meekins forty, Miss Carter ten, and I the remaining fifty."

"Tell him you got yours for your services?" grated Shanklin, the secretary and treasurer, who never lost a chance to be unpleasant.

"It was not necessary," said the lawyer with dignity. "The compensation was not excessive."

"He lounged in here yesterday," Shanklin continued, "and said he s'posed a job went with his stock. I told him he'd better finish college. He said that he knew enough now; that he needed an income to support himself and his mother the way they were used to living, seeing his father had left his mother nothing but

their home, and the plow stock didn't pay any dividends. I talked to him very patiently. I told him that his father had expected him to go through college, and then to come in and learn the business. He looked around and drawled, in that aggravating way of his, that he reckoned it wouldn't take him long to learn this business."

"The gall of him!" boomed big Dave Meekins, and spat, so that he could go on talking. "His granddaddy give his life to this business. He hired me when he founded it, and him and me, we made a success of it. His father started in here in knee-pants and never got through learnin'. And now this young snipe thinks he can blow in and learn it all in a day, like it was a lesson in figenometry, hey?"

"He said he thought new blood would be good for the business," said Shanklin, clearing his rusty throat.

"The whippersnapper!" exclaimed the lawyer.

"It would be funny if it were not so serious," said Miss Carter gravely. "He was a pert, officious boy, and the university has made him unbearable. He'll upset everything."

"I'm afraid he'll be inclined to meddle," agreed Shanklin. "He can't get over thinking it's his business, and that he ought to run it."

"Run it!" flashed the girl. "That tailor's dummy!"

"Why do you dislike him so, Miss Carter?" asked the lawyer curiously.

The bright color flooded the girl's face. A woman could not explain that her only cause for hatred was an amused impertinence that once had darted from young Mears's eyes and a light word in derision of her years of dignified service, in which she took so much pride. She let the question pass in silence.

"You will have to discipline the lad, Shanklin," observed the lawyer.

"Leave it to me!" said the secretary, his harsh face passionate. "I've been in this business, man and boy, for thirty

years. I've worked hard and saved till I own near a half interest. I never had no college education; I never had no time to play football or tickle a mandolin, but I think I can run things here yet. The question is—what shall we put him at? We can't well refuse him a place."

"Give him some light, unimportant work," suggested the lawyer with a wave of his ribboned glasses.

"I'd put him in overalls and give him a job in the foundry," grumbled Meekins. "That 'd take the airs out of him."

"You're all wrong," dimpled Miss Carter. "Make him president, in his father's place."

"President!" snarled Shanklin. "Think I'm going to take orders from a kid like him?"

"Of course not! He won't have any more real power as president than as office-boy. We four control the stock. A harmless title will let him feel good and make him easier to manage."

"Miss Carter is right," approved Morrison. "Dress him in a little brief authority. In all reasonable probability he'll soon get tired of business and be willing to sell out."

"That's the thing!" creaked Shanklin.

"Let him stay here a while and find out that business ain't tennis. We'll make his salary low, and when he gets good and disgusted, we'll buy him out!"

"Why not buy him out now?" asked Meekins.

"Well," ruminated Shanklin, with a curious facial twist that served him for a smile, "after he's been here a while, I reckon he'll be so glad to get out that we can buy his holdings cheap."

"And serve him right!" said Miss Carter vengefully.

Elizabeth Carter had started in at the Mears Plow Works as a filing-clerk when she wore braids and short dresses, and she had worked her way up to a position of authority. She was too stocky to be graceful, but her whole presence seemed to emanate cheerfulness and health. Not pretty, she had a white row of big, even



teeth and a pair of wide, clear, gray eyes which no one could look into and not trust.

She rose as she spoke, and the meeting broke up. Meekins and Morrison withdrew, and Shanklin and Miss Carter settled down to the morning mail. They had barely begun when young John Mears sauntered in through the doorway, over which, nearly fifty years before, his grandfather had hung the big wooden plow that still served for a sign.

## II

JOHN MEARS was tall and thin, with a prominent nose, a long chin, and a humorous mouth. His smartly cut black coat clung to his waist, and was rolled out at the lapels to display his tie and the black pearl pin which matched his sleeve-links. He carried a stick in a hand gloved with black kid.

Young Mears glanced impersonally over the little office force and sank wearily into a hard-bottomed chair facing the secretary. Miss Carter was standing at Shanklin's side.

"You don't have very luxurious seats," Mears remarked, crossing his long legs and carefully pulling up his creased trousers.

"Working people don't need 'em," snapped Mr. Shanklin.

Banks, the narrow young man who kept the books, grinned into his ledger. Young Mr. Mears adjusted his cuffs and let his glance wander disdainfully around the dingy office.

"In what department shall I display my talents?" he drawled.

"We have decided to make you president," Shanklin creaked, while Miss Carter watched the young man with controlled amusement. "Miss Carter will show you how we do things, and you can look around the premises until you get the run of them. Then we can decide what duties you had better handle. You can use your father's office," pursued the secretary, and jerked his head toward a door marked "private."

"All right," said Mears languidly. He rose, drew off his gloves, folded them carefully, and placed them in his breast-pocket. "Lead on, little fairy!" he said to Miss Carter, and opened the door of the small, bare office that had been his father's and his grandfather's before him.

"One moment!" An icy voice behind him made the young man turn, to find Elizabeth Carter's big eyes blazing into his. "I am not accustomed to such familiarity. I am called 'Miss Carter' here, Mr. Mears, and I expect to be so addressed by you!"

Most men would have been congealed by her tone, but not the self-satisfied Mr. Mears.

"Why, of course," he beamed at her, "on all formal occasions! But between ourselves, when we are old friends?"

"I am not aware that you and I are friends at all, Mr. Mears," Miss Carter informed him.

"That must be remedied, then," said the young man with calm assurance.

Miss Carter did not answer. She crossed the little room and jerked up the single window that looked out upon the littered factory yard.

"Raising a fine crop of cobwebs, I see!" Mears went on jauntily. "How about having the old place cleaned up a bit?"

He made a curlicue with the point of his stick upon the dusty desk.

"I will have it attended to," said the girl frigidly.

"Please," drawled the young man. "Meanwhile I'll stroll over the premises."

He lounged gracefully out of the office toward the factory. Miss Carter flew back to Mr. Shanklin's desk, her face flushed with anger.

"I just can't stand him!" she cried. "There isn't room for us both here!"

"Don't get excited," replied Shanklin, with a rusty grin that bared his yellow teeth. "He won't trouble us long."

"Don't he just hate himself?" queried Banks, as Miss Carter went to her own desk.

"If he doesn't, I do!" declared the girl.

The whole office was in a titter. Only Timmy Calhoun, the young Irishman who helped Banks, ventured in a wistful tone between approval and envy:

"I wish I could afford to wear clothes like those! And say, he can play football, too!"

"That's all he'll ever be able to do," snapped Miss Carter. "Get on with those statements, Timmy!"

An hour later Miss Carter had occasion to go out to the shops. In the yard that divided the office from the factory she came upon Mr. Mears, propped upon his stick. Facing him was bull-necked Dave Meekins, his blue shirt open over his hairy chest, both arms in furious motion, as the superintendent talked at the top of his voice.

"Now, Johnny," he was roaring, "you mustn't come here from college and be wantin' to turn everything upside down!"

"I merely wanted to know," said the young man mildly, "why the castings have to be trucked through the paintshop on the way from the foundry to the grinding-room."

"Because that's the nearest way!" belowered the old superintendent. "The shops are laid out the way your granddaddy built 'em."

"Your office has been prepared for you," broke in Miss Carter coldly.

"All right," said the young man, carefully dusting some bits of emery from his sleeve; "but I've had such a busy morning that I think I won't take up anything else until after lunch. Smudgy old place, isn't it?"

"It sent you to college," thought the girl scornfully, as she watched Mears make his way to the street.

"He ain't got no sense," grumbled Meekins to Miss Carter, as he stuffed a fresh wad of fine-cut into his mouth. "Asked a million fool questions, and don't know no more now than he did first."

"Never mind," the girl replied. "I don't think we'll see much of him. Short and easy hours seem to be his motto."

It did seem so. Young John did not get back from lunch until three o'clock, and he said that he had an engagement with a fellow at the club at four, so he was able to give only an hour that afternoon to the details of business. These Miss Carter dutifully, if curtly, tried her best to explain to him. He did not seem to absorb much; he passed from one thing to another as lightly as a butterfly from flower to flower.

"That's what he is—a mere butterfly," the girl complained to Shanklin after John had left for his club.

"All right!" said Shanklin, with his twisted grin. "We'll be the ants!"

### III

THE girl's contemptuous opinion of the young idler was confirmed as the days passed. The usual hours of the elegant Mr. Mears were from ten to twelve and from three to four. Even this was too much of him, Miss Carter often thought, when he had driven her almost wild with ridiculous questions.

"Why don't we get more orders?" he wanted to know.

"We never get many orders for plows in the middle of summer," the girl informed him. "Plowing is done in the spring and in the fall."

"Why, that's so; isn't it?" Mears would say, as one who had suddenly discovered a great and solemn truth. "But then," he ventured, after a moment's vacant reflection, "why do we keep on piling up stock in the warehouse? It gets all dusty."

"We have to accumulate goods in the summer for the fall trade," Miss Carter patiently explained. "We wouldn't have time to make them all after the orders come in."

"But how do you know what to make?" he wondered.

On another day Mears got hold of a long list of past-due accounts.

"Why don't we get after some of these people and collect the money?" he inquired.

"There is no money in the South until fall," the girl told him. "We have to give long terms and carry the merchants until cotton is picked."

"If we had this money, couldn't we discount our own bills? I saw a letter from some steel concern raising Cain."

"Certainly," Miss Carter agreed. "Did you ever hear a saying about wishes and horses?"

Afterward, to Shanklin, the girl wailed:

"He simply hasn't any sense!"

"Keep him amused," Shanklin instructed. "That 'll do for the present. We'll lose him one of these days. I'm getting matters shaped up now!"

It seemed to Miss Carter that the young man meddled with everything. Mears, who put in three hours a day, wanted to know why the one traveling salesman, fat old Bill Bailey, didn't spend six days a week on his territory, instead of loafing around the office on Mondays and Saturdays. He sniffed because Banks was too busy to make up some silly statements of comparative sales that Mears thought he wanted.

"Why do you want such a statement?" Miss Carter demanded. "There's a constant variation in trade between the same months of different years, owing to the weather and the crops. Knowing how many goods we sold last July won't help us sell any more this July, will it?"

This the young man had to admit, but he continued as pestiferous as ever. He brought down a book upon efficiency that he had picked up somewhere, and wanted Miss Carter to read it. It was all about standardization and system and motion study, full of wild theories which filled the experienced business woman with wonder and amusement.

She heard Mears talking to Banks.

"Banksy, old boy," he would begin in his patronizing way, "don't you think a loose-leaf ledger would be better than the one you have?"

"We investigated that, Mr. Mears," said the bookkeeper, "and found that it was not adapted to this business. The way we keep our accounts would not make it practicable. You see, every business is different, and—"

He went into a maze of technical details that made young Mears, in his ignorance, throw up his hands and flee. Miss Carter smiled quietly to herself at the rout.

The office force, with the exception of Timmy Calhoun, who was dazzled by John's clothes and football record, and who cherished a dream that Mr. Mears would put him on the road, resented the president's meddling. His easy hours made their own long days the harder to bear. The workmen in the shops laughed openly at his manners and called him "Willyboy" behind his back. The foremen delighted to force oily pieces of steel into his manicured hands.

If Mears realized the general feeling toward him, he was perfectly good-natured about it. He accepted the rebuffs and short answers that his ridiculous questions drew with a deprecating little laugh, and asked equally foolish ones a moment later.

"He hasn't sense enough to know what a fool he is," Miss Carter said to Mr. Shanklin. "He isn't even man enough to get angry when he's laughed at!"

It was part of Miss Carter's duties to look after what little advertising the Mears Plow Works did. It was not much; Shanklin recognized that there was nothing distinctive in a line of cast plows sold chiefly on friendship and price. Mears came to the girl with some suggestions for a sales campaign. In a few clear sentences she showed him the fallacies of his plan, and then, exasperated beyond endurance by his drawl and smile, she flashed out:

"Mr. Mears, you are in the wrong place here. You are not adapted to this business!"

For once her open contempt seemed to pierce his armor of complacency. His

long, humorous face turned slowly red. Then he recovered himself, and grinned more vexatiously than ever, as he drawled out:

"Tell you what—I need a vacation! I believe I've gone a bit stale getting this business all straight in my mind."

"Your—"

The girl bit her lip to restrain herself. Mears flushed again, but went on:

"A little rest will do me good. I think I'll run up North for a bit—eh, what?"

"I'm sure it would be restful for us all," she felt that she must answer.

Mr. Shanklin thought the vacation scheme excellent. Vacations were all right for other people, he said; as for himself, he had never had the time. Meekins slapped young Mears on the back so heartily that the boy winced, and boomed out:

"Don't hurry back! We'll git on all right!"

#### IV

So young Mears departed—with seven trunks, it was reported at the office. Miss Carter, even though relieved of the bother of his presence, thought with indignation of the "president" lolling at some Maine resort while the rest of them sweltered. She was restless, and the business did not seem to be going well. Bailey loafed more than ever, and his infrequent trips were unproductive.

The girl dipped into the efficiency book that Mears had left, and found some things which struck her more forcibly than they had when presented in Mears's witless way. She wondered if there was anything in the idea.

One day she came in from the warehouse, after having taken a stroll through its cool length at lunch-time. It had occurred to her that the finished stock-piles were too big, with such a low volume of orders, and she decided to speak to Mr. Shanklin about it. He was out, but on his desk lay a statement of the assets and liabilities of the Mears Plow Works

that struck her glance like the rays from a red lantern. She scrutinized it carefully, understanding only too well what it showed.

Just then Shanklin shambled in, a toothpick in the corner of his mouth. As usual, he was unshaven, and it struck the girl that the bristles on his head and face made him look like one of the long, thin razorbacks that run wild in the Virginia woods.

"Mr. Shanklin," she cried, "this statement is awful!"

Shanklin looked worn and grim, but there was a gleam in his usually dull eyes as he turned them on Miss Carter.

"That's to take up to the bank," he creaked. "They want one."

The girl looked back at him, startled.

"Won't they call our loan when they see that?"

There was wonder and a little fear in her tone.

"I want 'em to," rasped Shanklin.

"Oh!" said the girl, beginning to understand.

"Yes," said Shanklin, and went on rapidly in low, grating tones. "I been letting the balance run down on purpose; I knew they'd holler, and when they see this they'll holler louder. I got all the arrangements made with another bank for what money we need, so you needn't worry. Let Willyboy do that! It 'll get all over town that we're in bad shape, and he'll come running home, scared to death. That's where we come in, girly!"

He thrust his bristly face close to the girl's fresh one, and dropped his clammy fingers on her firm hand.

"Now, you're a good girl, Elizabeth. You been here a long time. When Mears comes back a howling, I'm going to buy him out at maybe thirty cents on the dollar, and I'll let you have some of the stock. Morrison or Meekins would be tickled stiff to get in, but I ain't going to let them. Just you and me are in on this, girly!"

"Do you think that's fair, Mr. Shanklin?" said Miss Carter, drawing back a



little. "Of course, I want to get rid of him, but I don't want to rob him."

"Sure it's fair!" Shanklin insisted, his rusty voice rising. "It's all the stock is worth. I paid cash for mine, but old Mears, he put in the business for his—good accounts and bad, new stock and dead, patents and good-will. Who's run this business? Who's done the work? Who's scraped and stinted and saved? Me! And now my time's coming—yours and mine. I'll take care of you, girly, all right!"

He reached out a clumsy hand to paw her shoulder.

"Hush!" she said. "Timmy Calhoun has his back to us, but he might hear. There's Banks coming in, too."

Miss Carter was glad of the interruption. She respected Shanklin's ability, but she did not like to have him touch her.

He was right, of course. The stock of the Mears Plow Works was not worth par, or anything like it. It would be best for all concerned to freeze Mears out. It would be best for the young fellow himself; he would never make a business man. She thought of Shanklin's hot eyes and clammy hands, and shivered a little, but she was not afraid of him, and she knew that he was right.

As Mr. Shanklin had predicted, it was hard upon the heels of this that young Mr. Mears lounged in; but if rumors of the company's insolvency had hastened his return, his manner did not show it. He appeared fresh from the hands of a Fifth Avenue tailor. His smooth face wore the same bland smile, and he looked, as usual, very cheerful, very idle, and perfectly satisfied with all the world and young John Mears.

"Back again, eh?" said Shanklin. He rubbed his hand with a grating noise over his bristly chin. "S'pose you had a fine time loafing, while the rest of us were slaving here!"

"I haven't been altogether idle," said young John pleasantly.

He laid a new stick across Shanklin's

desk, stripped off his gloves, and held out a pair of bruised and calloused palms.

"Rowing?" inquired Shanklin in amazement.

"Putting plows together," smiled Mears. "I've an old college friend in the designing department of the North Bend Plow Company. He got me a job in their shops."

Shanklin looked blankly at the young man. It seemed to Miss Carter, watching them both, that a greenish pallor spread over the secretary's face. The contrast between Shanklin's bristly features and Mears's pink, healthy skin struck her sharply.

"What on earth did you do that for?" Shanklin creaked at last.

"To get next to a real plow business," said the young man airily. "Say, I got a lot of bully ideas! We'll have to get together and thrash them out."

"All right!" said Shanklin grimly.

He had recovered from his surprise, and his hard jaw was set. Miss Carter realized that he was ready to strike.

"You're looking fine, Miss Carter," said Mears, and moved toward his own office. "Say, telephone Morrison and ask him to come down to see me as soon as he can, will you?"

Mears stopped to speak to Banks and the other employees. He slapped Timmy Calhoun on the back, and, putting an arm about the young Irishman's shoulders, led him into the private office and closed the door.

## V

SHANKLIN and Miss Carter exchanged a long look.

"Has he heard?" breathed the girl.

"Dunno, and don't care! We're ready for him!" The secretary's eyes glittered. "Get Morrison down, like he told you, and call Dave Meekins in. We might as well have it over."

Calhoun came out of the private office in a few moments, and Miss Carter pounced on him at once.

"What did he want of you?"



"Aw, just to tell me about some baseball games he saw," said the Irish lad uncomfortably. Then, under her searching scrutiny, he added: "He's going to put me on the road—gee!"

"Is that so?" Miss Carter snapped. "I wouldn't waste any time planning trips yet, if I were you."

Just then Morrison came in, brisk and dapper, as usual, and swinging his ribboned eye-glasses.

"Come on in!" called Mears, through the door which Calhoun had left open. "The rest of you, too; Banks and Bailey—I see he happens to be in. Bring along those papers, Timmy!"

Mears lounged back in his swivel chair, his smartly cut coat thrown open, his thumbs in the armholes of his stylish waistcoat, across which ran a slender chain of platinum and gold. His long, humorous face, a little dreamy, was the picture of self-satisfaction.

The others seated themselves—Shanklin, grim but rather nervous; Morrison, precise and formal; the narrow Banks; fat Bill Bailey, stodgily smoking a cheap cigar. Meekins rolled in, his hair freshly wet, and took up a strategic position near the cuspidor.

Miss Carter, white-waisted, trim, her face a little pale beneath her blond hair, sat at one side, studying the group. She felt uncomfortable, as if she were one of a fierce pack about to rend a helpless rabbit; but it had to be done.

Then came Timmy Calhoun with a sheaf of papers which he placed in front of the president. Miss Carter shot a keen glance at Calhoun, who flushed. Some silly statistics, she guessed, that the young Irishman had secretly prepared. She said to herself that Timmy should have a chance to find another place after the reorganization.

Mears had picked up the papers.

"I've been spending a couple of months in the North Bend Plow Works," he drawled, swinging his chair slowly around the circle of faces. "Now, we want to get together and see if we can't apply

some of the bully things I've picked up to the betterment of this business."

"What's the matter with this business?" Shanklin challenged in feigned indignation. Miss Carter realized that he was leading the young man on.

"Nearly everything," announced Mears, falling into the trap. "Our line is obsolete; nobody wants cast plows any more. We're overstocked; we owe too much for material, while our books are choked with dead accounts. Our processes are slow and wasteful; our records are not properly kept; we sit down and wait for trade to come to us, when—"

The men were all on their feet, raging at once.

"One at a time!" suggested young John mildly. "Mr. Shanklin, the bank called our loan the other day?"

"Yes," Shanklin admitted, and looked furtively at Miss Carter with the ghost of a smile.

"Mr. Bailey, how many towns did you make last month?"

"Why, Johnny, I don't reckon I can tell you offhand."

"I can," said John. "Only ten! Banks, what is our percentage of past-due accounts? What percentage of our sales are losses? What does a number ten point cost at the factory door?"

"I—I—er—" sputtered the narrow one, with an appealing look toward Shanklin, while Miss Carter stared in amazement.

"Never mind!" said John soothingly. "If you don't know the answers, I do, and they're nothing to be proud of. Now, Dave—"

Meekins was on his feet again, his booming voice trembling with feeling.

"Don't ye start criticisin' the shops, Johnny," he warned with a shaking forefinger. "I was runnin' 'em when ye was in the cradle, and—"

"Don't fly off the handle, Dave," said Mears quickly. "We've all got to pull together for the team. All I want to do is to find out what's wrong and figure out a remedy. Don't you know that every

pound of iron we use travels twice as far as it should?"

"No, I don't!" bellowed the old man. "You can monkey with the office all you like, but I'm a practical man, and no young snipe can tell me how to run the shops!"

"Be reasonable, Dave," begged Mears earnestly. "I value your experience, and I want you with me in the changes that must come—"

"Must is a big word, young man," cut in the malice-edged voice of Shanklin. "Now, let me talk—you've said enough."

"Why," said John, in a tone of gentle surprise, "I haven't begun! The main part of what I want to tell you is what I've learned. I wanted to explain how they do things at North Bend, and to get the ideas of all of you—"

"You can get mine right now," said Shanklin, his voice like a rusty razor. "If you don't like the way this business is run, you can quit. You say we are overstocked, water-logged with dead accounts, in bad shape generally. Very well! I'll buy your stock at thirty cents on the dollar, which is all you seem to think it worth, and you can get out!"

There was a note of victory in the harsh voice. A gleam of triumph shone in the baleful eyes.

"We don't want to hear no more from you, Mr. Mears," Shanklin went on. "The rest of us here own a majority of the stock. The best thing you can do is to take me up. Think it over!"

## VI

SHANKLIN stalked from the room, and the others, save Miss Carter and Mr. Morrison, followed him. The lawyer seemed uneasy. The girl sat quietly, her chin cupped in her hand, as if she was dreaming, but she was very much interested in what the young man would do next. She had something of the curiosity of an entomologist who has just empaled a butterfly.

The young man's face was flushed; the rebuff had stung. He gave a low whistle.

"I certainly stirred up a hornet's nest!" he said with a whimsical, half-painful grin. "I'm disappointed that they wouldn't listen, but I don't know that I'm surprised. I spoke in good faith, but I had a notion that perhaps I had been framed; and when I see how my amicable suggestions have been treated, I'm sure of it!"

From the inside pocket of his form-fitting coat Mears drew a pigskin wallet, from which he took five new one-thousand-dollar bills, which he spread, like a poker hand, upon the desk in front of the lawyer.

"Mr. Morrison," he announced, "I want to buy your fifty shares at par."

"Why should I dispose of my stock?" asked Morrison, dangling his glasses nervously.

"Because you may as well chuck it in the fire if you don't. I must increase my holdings to protect what I now have. I persuaded mother to mortgage her home to get this money, so you can see I'm in earnest. If I can have a free hand, I can put this business on a paying basis. If I can't, I shall apply for a receivership this afternoon."

Miss Carter watched the two men, her eyes wide with surprise. Morrison fiddled with his glasses, uncertain of his course. There was no uncertainty in Mears's face; it had lost none of its good humor, but the long chin was held at a different slant, and there was a new tone in the president's voice.

Miss Carter was filled with alarm. Mears was attacking from an unexpected angle, and no one knew better than the girl the peril of the stockholders.

"If I throw this company into the hands of a receiver," Mears went on firmly, "your stock is so much waste paper. You know the business is in a bad way, but your fellow conspirators may not have told you how bad, nor why."

"Hold on, John!" interposed the lawyer, with a quick wave of the ribboned glasses. "I'm no conspirator! Shanklin has insisted all along that you are a worthless trifler. He told me last week

that you didn't like the business, and were going to withdraw; that the works were in bad shape through your father's mismanagement—"

"What?" snapped John, with his first show of heat. "That misfit crook tried to put it on father? The truth is that Shanklin has deliberately scuttled this business so that he could buy it cheap. He has overplayed his hand, though. If the works were closed up to-day, the creditors might be paid, but the stockholders wouldn't get a cent. Calhoun has made up some statements for me while I was away, and I can prove every word of what I say."

"What would you do if you had control?"

"Hire a live designer and build an up-to-date line of chilled plows. First, though, get two or three live salesmen and sell that old stock. I would collect the accounts due us, and pay our own; install a modern office system; reorganize the factory. Why, man," cried Mears with an enthusiasm which Miss Carter had never dreamed him capable of, "there's any amount of money to be made here! We've coal and iron at our doors; we've favorable freight-rates all over the South. Put us in good shape, and not one of the big Northern concerns can touch us in our own field. I've got the cold figures to show it. Shanklin has tried to betray us for his own profit; but you, Mr. Morrison, were my father's friend. This business was founded by a Mears, developed by a Mears, and here is the third Mears ready to fight to the last ditch."

He lapsed into his old whimsical manner; his slow smile returned, and he drew out:

"Are ye wid me, or ag'in' me?"

"With you, my boy!" cried the lawyer, jabbing his glasses firmly on his nose. "You needn't even buy my stock; I'll give you a proxy, and you can vote it yourself. I never did trust Shanklin."

"That's fine of you, Mr. Morrison," said John, his voice full of feeling. "Miss Carter, will you sell me your stock?"

"Most certainly I won't!" the girl blazed out. "If you can fight, so can I, if I am a woman. Remember this—you can muster no more stock than Mr. Shanklin, Mr. Meekins, and myself. Do you think I'll sell them out and give you control?"

"Do you realize that if I apply for a receivership you will lose your whole investment?"

"I don't care! If you make my stock worthless, yours goes too, and you have the more to lose. I've earned my own living all my life, and I can keep on earning it somewhere. I can get another job to-morrow, and that's more than you can, you—your college dude!"

## VII

ELIZABETH CARTER rushed out of the office, fairly sick with rage. Not that she feared the monetary loss; not that she held herself bound to Shanklin; but she was angry to the core to think that she had been so deceived in the character of John Mears. To think that she, who prided herself upon her clear brain, had not been able to perceive the purposeful, observant man beneath the garb and manner of the idler!

She found Shanklin and Meekins together in the outer office. The big superintendent's jaws were working steadily on his tobacco, but he seemed to have nothing to say. Shanklin was nervously confident.

"We put the skids under the young dude, didn't we, girly?" creaked Shanklin, reaching out a clammy hand. "I've fired that young whelp Timmy Calhoun. Is Mears going to take my offer and get out?"

"How do I know?" she almost screamed at him. "Take your hands off me, will you? I hate to have anybody pawing at me."

She went over to the safe, and took from a private drawer a document which she carried to her desk. Her pen scratched rapidly across the paper; then she sprang up again and darted back into Mears's

office. The two men followed her, Meekins stolidly, Shanklin in some alarm.

Mears sat silently at his desk, the humorous look gone from his long face. Miss Carter saw that he realized his defeat. She knew that he had counted on her loyalty to the firm, and to his father, who had hired and taught her; that he had believed her quick wit and good sense would make her see his side. Then he should have treated her differently! Her feminine vanity was touched to the quick.

Mears looked dully up at the girl as she came in, the two men at her back. Her eyes still blazed with anger as she threw down the paper in her hand in front of Mears. It was a certificate for ten shares of stock made out to Elizabeth Carter, and the girl had indorsed it over to John Mears.

"I don't want to sell out, but you can take that stock and vote it," she cried. "I'm just as much a part of this business as if I were a Mears. I've worked for it and worried for it all these years, and if it goes down I'll go with it. I know you're right—I can't help but see it. I believe you can save the business, but I hate you—oh, how I hate you!"

She dropped into a chair and buried

her blond head in her arms, in a passion of weeping. Mears gazed at her dumbly. He realized that the way of a woman was beyond his ken; but he saw that she had given him victory just when he had thought the battle lost. He turned to Shanklin with something of the calm pose that he usually wore.

"Seems I won't have to sell out, doesn't it?" he drawled. "Shanklin, I'll make you an offer. I've convinced Mr. Gramling, of the State Bank, that with a free hand I can make this business pay; and he is willing to take your stock at par. I'm not trying to squeeze you out at a loss, you see; but I think your resignation is in order."

"Take it, confound you!" cried Shanklin at the top of his rusty voice. He turned to the girl, his bony fist clenched so tightly that the knuckles showed white. "So you did me up, did you, you dirty little—"

Mears had sprung to his feet, but Meekins was the nearer. His big hand caught Shanklin firmly by the scrawny neck.

"Don't you talk that way to the girl!" he thundered. "Darn it, I believe she's right. I feel the same way myself!"

### THE SOUL OF ERIN

'Tis the night-call of wildings in leaf shadows hid,  
And its cadence has grown on my ear,  
Till the moonlit nights quicken and thrill as they bid  
List a language I only can hear.

Ah, they called thus, I know, to the Erin of old,  
While the Bard of Avoca still sang;  
And the silent nights travailed her soul to unfold  
When no longer his silver harp rang.

And the soul of her night-time, so tragic, so sweet,  
He sang into the souls of her sons,  
Till wherever its voices their scions shall greet  
The rapt music of Erin still runs.

Oh, ye nights of wild voices and shadowy green,  
How you call me to take up my lyre!  
For you are of the soul of that Erin unseen,  
And you are of the soul of my sire!

*Charles Fitz Henry*



# Free and Equal



*by William Slavens McNutt*

“THEY say that all men are born free an’ equal. Sure! It’s daylight in the daytime, an’ dark at night, too. What about it? All the horses in the Suburban Handicap start from the same post at the same time, but that ain’t sayin’ they get back together. They go under the webbin’ with their tails in line, startin’ equal an’ free to get back as quick as their legs ’ll let ’em. That don’t buy ’em any hay, you know. They don’t get nothin’ for startin’. That’s the reason why they start equal. Anybody ’ll give anybody their half o’ nothin’ that nobody wants!

“The hay stake an’ the getaway money’s all paid for the finish; an’ buh-lieve me, bo, them same nags that dusted the same part o’ the track with their hind feet at the same time don’t nose the dough together. An’ what o’ that? If they did, nobody’d put up the dough to run for, an’ they wouldn’t be no horse-racin’. Then all the ponies could drag plows, couldn’t they? Yeh! But some could go down a corn-field quicker than some others, and the ones that got to the end of the furrow first would get the most eats an’ the best stalls. Free an’ equal!

“Free from what an’ equal to who? Huh! I wonder if them old birds that doped out this Constitution thing were tryin’ to kid somebody? Or were they in earnest? Were they witty, or just stupid?

“All men are born with one mouth an’ two eyes; but they don’t spend time tellin’ you that on the Fourth o’ July. It’s true, but it don’t prove that all that are born get the same kind of food an’ see the same scenery, does it? Not!

“Me, I’m just a medium good crook an’ an all-round handy man on the road. I’ve blown a few pretty tough boxes in my time, but nothin’ to brag about. I might ’a’ been a good safe-breaker if I’d stuck to it steady, but I don’t like the life. It’s like any other trade, you know; you got to apply yourself if you expect to get anywhere with it; an’ I don’t care enough about it to stick to business like I should.

“Why, I go for years at a time without ever turnin’ a trick. Ye-es! I can just bum around an’ have a good time followin’ the heat—north in summer, an’ south when the school-bells toll. Wherever I can use the air for a blanket I’m safe. I can trust to my tongue to talk me my



scoffin'. A tale o' wo is good for a meal in any land; but oratory don't get you the room-key. No! The skipper of a lunch-cart has ears, but a landlord is deaf.

"Why, I've even worked. Yeh! Not as a steady thing, of course, but now and then. It ain't bad. It's kind o' monotonous, o' course, but it's all right once in a while.

"I've had a bunch o' fun out of it all. I ain't kickin'. I'm no John D. Rockefeller, an' I know it. If he give me all he's got, I'd be broke again in a year. What I couldn't spend, some wise fish would take away from me. Why should I fret for a chance to race on a track where my legs won't carry me?

"Me an' Teddy Roosevelt both started from scratch with nothin' but a mother an' an appetite; but that didn't find me no five-eyed cows nor web-footed cats, nor nothin' like that, you know. I've seen some animals that ain't, myself; but look-in' at 'em never got me on the front page. No! All I got out of it was a berth in the alcoholic ward, where a hard-hearted doctor proved I was wrong in thinkin' that a pink-toed whiffletit was tryin' to whittle a square foot of skin off my chest, to graft onto a three-legged kazootski what 'd been drinkin' at the bar with me, an' got burned when his drink stumbled on the door-step of his face an' went down outside instead of in—thereby scaldin' him somethin' frightful.

"I started with the same kind of a suit that this Vernon Castle guy began in. That don't get me credit with no tailor, does it? I got just as many feet as he has, but look at the difference. His feet went out in the world an' come back with their toes full o' bank-roll; all mine ever brought me was footsoreness. People go give him money of their own free will just for a chance to see him; I got to go look for mine, an' if the people I get it from see me—good night! I get booked for a five-year run at one theater, at a weekly salary of twenty-one meals an' a fine chance for a return date!

"Get me straight, kid. I ain't kickin' at the gait I drew. Somebody's got to run at my speed, an' I'd rather be comfortable, just keepin' up with myself, than to fracture a lung tryin' to give my dust to some rangy guy that was built to go fast easier than I can go slow. I ain't squawkin' 'cause the Steel Trust can make money without me at the head of it. No!

"I ain't equal to some, an' some ain't equal to me. I'm wise to that, but it don't license me to pack a blackjack for the bird that's got my time beat, does it? No! An' should I slow up an' give runnin' lessons to some turtle that can't keep step with me? I'm right again—I should not!

"The guy I pass may have it all over me, at that. I see more scenery than he does, but I don't get as good a look at it. If he hits a stretch o' road that suits his feet, he's on it longer than I am. If he was travelin' faster, he'd get where he didn't want to be all the quicker. Do you get me?

"I'm sore at these entries in the human race that yell 'Foul!' just because the winner can run faster than the goat that comes in last. I'm sore at farm horses that kick over the trace-chains an' bite the farmer that feeds 'em 'cause they can't run in the English Derby an' keep up with the winner. I'm sore at this free-an'-equal stuff, an' the way a lot o' people think about it.

"You know there ain't no guy equal to some other guy that's better. No! An' there ain't no man free from his own limit, whatever that is. These guys that beef because a street-sweeper ain't a poet give me the jing-willies. Be a fine lot o' boulevards in a city o' poets, wouldn't they?

"A tree don't always grow better for bein' transplanted, you know. Just because you take cold from gettin' your feet wet is no reason to put the goldfish in a dry place to protect 'em from the grippe. A second-story worker at a prayer-meetin' is just as far out o' luck

as a Methodist deacon in the dock at a police-court; an' the Waldorf is no pleasant home for a barrel-house bum. You got to figure all these things like a reasonable man, kid.

## II

"I've been balled up with one o' these guys that knows all men are free an' equal, an' can't sleep nights 'cause they ain't. He had an education an' a heart. He had too much o' both. A sympathetic guy with no education would slip his down-an'-out friends a piece o' change when he was flush, an' let it pass at that. A bird with an education an' no feelin' for his fellow man would keep the rubber on his roll in public, an' save his popularity for the bank cashier. This gazook used to keep sad for weeks at a time, mournin' to think how few bootblacks get terrapin for breakfast; an' when he remembered that a Polack shovel-stiff couldn't visit the President without gettin' an appointment, he'd break right out in a rash. He knew so much, he had no sense.

"I'm ridin' herd on a mulligan under a railroad bridge, near a little town in Washington, when this mistake by the name of Henry Pettigrew first happened in my sight. He skidded off the track, an' rode down the bank toward me on a pair o' the most desperate-lookin' shoes I ever saw outside a vaudeville house or a charity box. They weren't even relatives. One shoe was thick an' broad, an' come high on his leg, to about the place where it hurts worst when you bark your shin; the other was thin and low-necked, givin' the ankle-bone a chance for its breath.

"His toes stuck out of each shoe like tobacco-stained buck-teeth out of a hookwormed cracker's mouth. If he'd put the soles of his feet together, he'd 'a' been laughin' at you. He could 'a' hung his pants on a pole an' passed 'em off as the bullet-torn colors of the gallant Umpty-steenth after the battle o' Bay Rum, an' got away with it. It was easy

to believe that the things that had been done to them pants could only happen in war time. The poor, mangled corpse of an unlucky felt hat was laid out on his head, an' the worst thing about the old flannel shirt he had on was that his coat was too full o' holes to hide it. He looked like a teetotaler's idea o' what comes o' drink.

"I've run across a hop-head or two in my time that looked as bad as him, an' that's my first guess on this bird; but then I take notice his eyes is clear, an' I give up an' wait for him to spring the joke.

"'Hello, cul!' he says to me out o' one corner of his mouth, real tough. 'How's tricks?'

"'From the look o' you, I think one's bein' played on me,' I says. 'What are you made up for? Payin' a bet?'

"'I ain't made up,' he says. 'I'm a hobo.'

"'You're a liar!' I says. 'I'm a hobo. If you was one, I'd be ashamed to be.'

"'Oh, pshaw!' he says, like a man slappin' his own wrist. 'How can you tell I'm not a real hobo?'

"'By your clothes, you poor boob!' I says to him.

"'What's wrong with 'em?' he says, lookin' himself over. 'I thought I made a very artistic selection. I've seen lots of hoboos on South Clark Street, in Chicago, dressed very much as I am. In fact,' he says, 'I spent a week there studying costume before I picked these clothes out as being typical.'

"'You're a fine comedy!' I tell him. 'Them guys you see around South Clark Street dressed like last year's scarecrows ain't boes. They're barrel-house moochers, you simp!'

"'Oh!' he says. 'What's a barrel-house moocher?'

"'A retired bo that's thirsty instead of ambitious,' I wise him. 'They never leave town. They couldn't stay on the rods for the length o' the freight-yards; an' if they got put off between towns, where they couldn't mooch a drink for a

few hours, they'd go mad an' bite the farmers. They wears rags for business reasons,' I tell him. 'The sadder they look, the more drink money they get from the boobs on the boulevard.'

"'But hoboos wear old clothes, don't they?'" he asks me.

"'Not for long,' I says. 'That's as long as old clothes last on the road. It's a tough life on cloth, you know,' I says to him. 'You got to have good, durable duds to travel without a ticket. A bo that looks like one don't travel,' I says to him. 'He just moves every thirty days from one jail to another. A bo's got to be awful careful with his dress, or it takes him a month to pass through any given town. If you don't look neat an' clean enough to get by as an honest working man, the bulls jug you for a vag. If you flash too clean a front, the tin-star boys o' the By-Gosh Militia give you the hoose-gow for lookin' too much like a bank clerk without his visible means o' payin' the tailor. A bo,' I says to him, 'has got to be a good actor, an' dressin' the part ain't all the performance. He's got to be able to ride the rods all night with nothin' but smoke an' cinders to stay his appetite, to roll out from under at the station in the mornin', an' to walk up-town like a guy with a good job in the roundhouse goin' home to breakfast. When he passes a bull on Main Street, he's got to give a lifelike imitation o' some honest working man the officer's seen around town for years an' years. It's an art,' I says to him.

"'Outrageous!' he yells, goin' mad all of a sudden. 'It's a crime!'

"'Yes, ain't it?' I says. 'What is?'

"'The tyranny of the police,' he says. 'It makes my very blood boil! What right have they to persecute a poor man just because his coat is ragged? A uni-formed army o' brutal thugs!' he says.

"'They're makin' a livin',' I says to him. 'We all got to get by somehow. If there weren't any of us boes or crooks, the police would all be out of a job; an' if there weren't any police there'd be so

much competition, a regular safe-blower couldn't make a livin',' I says. 'What are you beefin' about?'

"'Ah, the horror of it!' he says, like a Y. M. C. A. secretary talking about cigarettes. 'Our iniquitous social system has so degraded your manhood that you are no longer capable even of protest. The brutality an' injustice of it all has unmanned you,' he says.

"'Is that a fact?' I says, gettin' sore. 'There may be somethin' ailin' me, but nobody's been able to prove it yet,' I says. 'I may not be a man,' I says, 'but I'll bet this little gasoline-can full o' nice, hot mulligan against nothin' at all that I can lick you with one hand while rollin' a cigarette with the other, an' never spill a flake o' tobacco!'

"'We of the proletariat must not waste our strength in useless brawling,' he says. 'We must stand together against our common foe, capitalism.'

"'We of the proly what?' I says.

"'The common people,' he says.

"'You talk like a candidate,' I says to him. 'What are you runnin' for? Buh-lieve me,' I says to him, 'there's nothin' common about you. You're the only one o' your kind I ever see!'

"'I'm a seeker after truth,' he says, like a guy prayin'.

"'You look like the fruit o' the hickory-tree to me,' I says to him. 'Somebody's kiddin' somebody,' I says. 'Which one of us is laughin' at the other? Are you puttin' one over on me, or are you as funny as you look?'

"'I am not what I seem,' he owns up.

"'I know you ain't,' I says. 'There ain't no such thing as you seem to be.'

"'Until recently I was professor of sociology in Sharrock University,' he says. 'The trustees—at the bidding of the capitalists—demanded my resignation.'

"'Well,' I says, 'I suppose there's a limit to what even a university can stand for.'

"'There is no freedom,' he yells at me. 'Democracy is a joke. We are dominated by the dollar! We are cursed

by a social system more barbaric than that which obtains in darkest Russia,' he says.

" 'Dip your wrist in the crick,' I tell him. 'That 'll help cool you off.'

" 'I have come to dwell with the dregs,' he says. 'Who am I that I should sit in the seats of the mighty? Only the accident of birth,' he says, 'put me above you.'

" 'Your birth wasn't an accident,' I says to him. 'It was a mistake.'

" 'Let us not quarrel,' he says. 'I have need of you. I have come in rags to learn how you of the underworld of poverty live; to learn your problems, your hopes, fears, and ideals. I have come to live the life of a poor, wandering, persecuted outcast; to feel the heel of tyranny; to be beaten and enslaved by authorized thugs of the law; to hunger an' thirst an' endure with you, that I may return an' cry your woes with a tongue of fire.'

" 'You ain't goin' to hunger an' thirst with me,' I says. 'Them's two little things I never do.'

" 'My poor brother,' he says, 'you have become callous to the horror of your position. I will awaken you!'

" 'If you're awake, let me sleep,' I says. 'You're awful funny, but I don't feel like laughin' any more, so—on your way. You go hunger, an' leave me eat my mulligan.'

" 'No!' he says. 'I have need of you. I am desirous of leading the life of a hobo, but I require an instructor—a guide, as it were,' he says. 'I'm just entering on my great experiment. You are the first person I have met since I changed my clothing at yonder village and resigned my identity as a member of the so-called upper class. You recognized me instantly as an impostor. It is evident that my assumption of the character of a hobo is not skilful. You must instruct me in the dress and manner and speech of your unfortunate fellows of the road. I will travel with you, and—'

" 'You will travel,' I cut in on his wire, 'but not with me. No! You will travel

away from here real sudden,' I says, 'but not with me. If you don't start soon, I may be behind you for a little piece with a club, but I will not be with you. I'd have a fine chance,' I says, 'travelin' with you! I got enough to do,' I says, 'to get my own scoffin' an' a little piece o' change now an' again, without hustlin' for two. If you want a travelin' companion,' I says, 'go hire one!'

" 'Precisely what I intend doing,' he says. 'I wish to hire you.'

" 'Well, of course, that was somethin' else again. I knew he was dippy, but you know how it is with money; it don't care who has it.

" 'How much?' I asks him.

" 'Would two hundred dollars a month be fair?' he says.

" 'Well, yes, fair,' I says, tryin' to yawn to keep him from seein' how much less I'd have been glad to take. 'Have you got it with you?'

" 'He didn't have the dough with him, but I soon found out that he could get it out o' the bank if he wanted to. You know what? That nut was rich as well as foolish. He didn't need to be a professor for a livin' any more than he needed to be a bum.

" 'I wanted him to pay me by the week, as we went along, but he wouldn't stand for that. He was bound we was goin' to travel broke, same as if we couldn't get any money nohow without workin' for it, or somethin'. Can you beat it? He had money, an' wouldn't spend it! An' it wasn't as if he was a tightwad. No! He didn't mind lettin' go o' his dough; he just wanted to suffer without it. Because somebody else didn't have some, he wanted to play he was broke, too. Why, say! That guy was nutty enough to jimmy his way into jail!

### III

" 'WELL, we doped out a contract that said I was to guide him around from one water-tank to another, an' teach him how to be poor an' miserable for two hundred bucks a month, the which I was to collect



after I got tired of him an' quit. I figured on workin' about two weeks an' then grabbin' the hundred that 'd be comin' to me at the end o' that time; but he was foxy. He made me agree to stick with him at least three months, or forfeit what was comin' to me. I didn't think I could stand his nonsense for three months, an' I told him so; but he was stubborn about that.

"Suppose," I says to him, "that whatever it is that is wrong with you is catchin'," I says. "I might get it from trailin' around with you that long, an' at the end o' the time I wouldn't want the money. I might want to stay broke, because everybody ain't rich. Think of it!" I says to him. "If I was took down that way, I'd be cheatin' myself out of six hundred dollars. I don't mind the loss of the money," I lies to him, "but I never could trust myself again."

"I might as well 'a' been talkin' temperance to a whisky salesman, or sense to a politician. He heard what I said, but he couldn't see what I meant; so at the end o' the powwow I signed up to herd this boob for three months.

"Now," I says to him, when we'd come to terms, "we got to get you some fit clothes, first off," I says. "I'll be seen with you for a price," I says, "but not in them things!"

"But how can we get any?" he says. "We have no money."

"That's your fault," I says to him. "You want to learn how to suffer for lack of a piece o' change; so begin right now," I says; an' I sit an' think till I get a good hunch. "You wait here," I says to him, "till I go find a barrel somewheres. Then you strip off naked an' get into it, see?"

"I don't see why I should get into a barrel," he says.

"So you won't be seen," I tells him. "You strip an' get into the barrel, an' come along with me. We'll go up to a farmhouse, an' tell the hicks that we're a couple o' honest, simple laborin' men travelin' in search o' work. We'll tell

'em that a naughty tramp held us up at the point of a gun an' took all your clothes away from you, leavin' you none o' his to help you out. You'd just spent your last cent for a nice, strong, neat suit that was to help you get a start in the world, see? An' you're broken-hearted as well as chilly. With you in the barrel for evidence, sheddin' a few tears while I talk, we'll get you an outfit that 'll pass till we can do better."

"But the idea o' me goin' in a barrel!" he balks. "How utterly absurd! It's like a funny picture."

"That's just why the barrel," I says. "Every time you see a man in a picture that's lost his clothes, you see him in a barrel, don't you? Yeh! Well, then, if you really see a guy done up in a barrel comin' down the pike, the first thing you think is that there's a fellow that's lost his clothes. Get me? I tell the hicks you've lost your clothes, an' when they see you in the barrel, they know it's so. If you had on anything else, like a blanket or a piece o' tarpaper, they might be suspicious; but a guy in a barrel's always lost his clothes. See it?"

"He was awful stubborn about it, but finally I make him see I'm right, an' go hunt him up a barrel. He looked real cute when he got all his clothes off an' crawled into that barrel. He looked some like a he Salome with a wooden veil. He let out an awful roar when I threw all his clothes in the crick.

"Fish 'em out!" he yells at me, watchin' 'em float away with the current. "I can't manage in this confounded barrel! What did you throw my clothes away for?"

"That's why," I explains to him. "There'll be a way for you to get some clothes now, 'cause you just naturally got to have 'em."

"But this is ridiculous," he tells me. "I can't go anywhere like this!"

"Too bad," I says to him, "'cause I'm goin' somewhere, an' it 'll be lonesome without you along."

"An' with that, I clumb the bank an' started up the track. He bawled after me like a motherless calf singin' o' dinner-time, but I kep' goin', an' by an' by I look back an' see him comin'. I couldn't make out what made him walk so funny, till he caught up with me an' explained. It seems the cinders hurt his feet. An' then he was complainin' 'cause I hadn't took all the nails out o' the barrel. He was the grumblin'est man! I didn't have no claw-hammer to yank out nails with.

"He wanted me to leave him in the shade of a bush an' go beg him some clothes, but I showed him how I couldn't get nothin' to wear handed out to me without him for evidence. So we seen a farmhouse not far away, an' started across a field toward it.

"We come around from behind the barn into the yard, an' there was some men an' a couple o' women settin' on the back porch. They all stood up an' yelled when they seen the professor in the barrel, an' before I had a chance to tell 'em how he come so, they was a dog come rippin' around from the front o' the house. That dog he didn't take no notice o' me, but he was set for gettin' acquainted with Pettigrew.

"The professor didn't have no presence o' mind at all. No man in his right senses would 'a' tried to outrun a dog inside o' that barrel, especially when they was so many ingrowin' nails to hinder; but Pettigrew tried that very thing. The dog, he fetched up from behind, an' sampled a piece o' the professor's left heel. It must 'a' been sweet dog-meat, 'cause the hound goes right back for more.

"'Squat down in the barrel!' I yells, an' the professor done so.

"He'd 'a' been all right if the dog had had less sense, or the barrel had had a head on it. You know what? That hound does a Brodie, an' comes down head first in the cask, right along with Pettigrew. They was wedged in so tight that neither of 'em could squirm out, an'

the fun begun. That barrel, it rolled an' ramped around here an' there, an' the queerest noises come out of it. The hicks on the porch was so surprised they couldn't do nothin' but just yell an' look; an' I ain't sure how to act myself.

"While I'm thinkin' what to do, a mule done it for me. This mule, he was eatin' some grass or somethin', an' the barrel, it rolled up against his hind feet. The mule, he's curious to know what's in that barrel to make it act so, an' he kicks it open to find out. He landed some wallop! For a minute they was professor an' staves an' dog an' busted hoops flyin' every which way.

"The dog, he lit runnin' north, an' kept on his way. He'd had enough! The professor come down with his face to the southward, and he didn't stop to look back, neither. It was comical, the way them two—the professor an' the dog—separated. The dog goes out o' sight around the house, an' it ain't two blinks before we can't see the professor for the barn. All that was left o' the trouble was the mule an' the busted barrel. The mule, he smelled of a stave, an' says, 'Hee-hee-hee-haw-haw-haw!' an' went on eatin' grass or somethin'; an' I spoke to the hicks on the porch an' told 'em how it was—how my pardner'd been held up by a tramp that took all his clothes.

"It all worked out fine, 'cause they was all in a good humor from laughin' when I got done tellin' 'em about it, an' they rustled me a real decent layout o' shoes an' socks an' pants an' things. A boob with a wide grin on 'll give you a dollar when he'd only donate a ten-cent piece with a tear in his eye. Sad stories are easier to think up; but a funny one gets the best handout.

"I took the duds with me an' found the professor down in the corn-field. He was scratched up some—an' awful talkative.

"'What are you beefin' about?' I asks him. 'Here's the clothes. My scheme worked, didn't it?'

" 'I might 'a' been killed,' he complains.

" 'Ain't it terrible to think of?' I says. 'Maybe after this experience you can go an' cry with a tongue o' fire about the brutality o' dogs an' mules. I'd rather,' I says to him, 'flirt with a policeman's night-stick any day than a northwest-bound mule's southeast foot.'

" But he could only get het up about what terrible things humans did. We bummed around for several weeks here an' there, an' he see slavery everywhere he went. He was dotty about everybody bein' equal to everybody else, an' every time he see anybody doin' somethin' everybody else didn't do, he'd throw himself a fit an' swear everything was all wrong. Gosh! I'd hate to have to live in a world as bad as he thought this one was!

#### IV

" I GOT to hand it to the professor for bein' a swift learner, though. The way that man did pick up language! Inside of a month he could spread a line o' tough talk that 'd convict him o' murder in the first degree, even with a gas-house jury. It got so yeggs we meet along the road would size us up, an' ask me why I travel with such a tough rooster. That's a fact! He was so anxious to be as bad as we were that he was a whole lot worse.

" I got him by all peaceable an' easy till we got to Seattle. We rambled into that town one summer day in the state-room of a stock-car, dreamin' o' nothin' but food an' drink, till the professor lamped a second-hand newspaper an' declared war. It said in this paper how there was a strike o' the garment-workers in Seattle, an' told about some o' 'em bein' pinched durin' a riot. He reads me part of the piece about it:

" 'The police clubbed their way through the rioting strikers gathered in front of Rosenheim's, on Third Avenue, and arrested Herman Koch, who had thrown a brick through the plate-glass window. A determined effort on the part of

the strikers to rescue the prisoner from his captors was frustrated by the timely arrival of a large force of reserves. The police were compelled to use their clubs freely. Sergeant Dykeman and Patrolman Schnitzhauser were wounded about the head and face by flying bricks and clubs.'

" 'Is that so?' I says. 'Le's go see if we can dig up a feed somewhere.'

" 'Feed!' the professor yells at me. 'Feed! Can a man eat after reading such a story of barbarism? Would not indignation,' he says, 'choke you at the thought of it?'

" 'What?' I says. 'Me fast because a couple of bulls got beaned in a street-fight?'

" 'But the strikers!' he preaches at me. 'Free-born American citizens clubbed in the streets by the minions of the law!'

" I have no love for a policeman, but I couldn't get his argument. It looked to me as if the strikers won the fight, or were entitled to a draw, anyway. But the professor's head was loose an' comin' further unscrewed all the time.

" 'Here's our opportunity to do something practical,' he says. 'These strikers are our own brothers and sisters. Shall we shrink,' he says, 'from our duty? Or shall we go to their aid like brave men an' true?'

" Well, if you've got any idea of the professor from what I've told you of him, you know what we done. We went to their aid like a couple o' small-town fish rushin' to keep a three-card-monte man in eatin' money. It was a phony strike. The garment-workers' union hadn't called it. It seems some outside agitators had started it just for a little excitement. The garment-workers didn't take much notice of it at first, but the papers did. They come out with long stories an' said what an awful thing it was, an' told how the garment-workers were bein' intimidated an' didn't dare go to work. The garment-workers read it in the papers—how they was scared to go to work—an' believed what they read. Bein' scared to go to work be-

cause they read that they were scared, they had nothin' to do but stand around in a bunch an' talk it over. Some nut with a few drinks aboard found an idle brick an' put it to work on a plate-glass window. The police come up on the run, an' got all tangled up with a lot o' innocent bystanders that was tryin' to get out o' the way. That made a regular strike of it, with all the trimmin's.

"I'd been mixed up in strikes before, so I soon got the straight o' this one an' tipped the professor.

"A lie," he says, 'circulated by the capitalistic press! We shall stay,' he says, 'an' do our duty by our oppressed fellows.'

"So we stuck around, an' that night we turn up at a hall where there was a strike meetin' goin' on. There was less sense to it than a session o' Congress. Some guy would get up an' yell like a man with a toothache, an' then the bunch would vote on somethin' nobody knew anything about, an' make it unanimous in order to give another loud noise a chance to sound.

"An' then, all of a sudden, one of the prettiest girls I ever seen popped up on the platform, an' everybody stopped talkin' to get an eyeful. I sure did pity the blind when I saw her! Some Jane, that one! About twenty-five years old, with big, black eyes an' black hair, an'—an'—oh, well, I'm no poet! She was there, that's all. If she'd been Cleopatra, Mark Antony would 'a' gone still nuttier than he did.

"An' then she started to talk. Bing! If you picked up a rose, an' it exploded in your face like a stick o' dynamite, you'd feel like I did when she spoke. Tough? Baby doll! I've known a moll or two in my time with a gift for the Avenue A stuff, but this chicken could cackle rougher than anything I ever listened to.

"What's wrong with you scurvy bums?" she blats out. 'Are you men an' women, or are you a lot of tired, fat worms, too lazy to turn over when you're

stepped on? Are you goin' to let the police put this rough stuff over on you, or are you goin' to step in close an' knead the bread in their lunch-baskets? Bang these club-swingers on the beezer, you boys! If they don't like knuckles, feed 'em bricks! You've got as much right on your side as the Boston guys that dumped the tea in the drink when this land was a pup. Don't let any of these overfed employers an' their pet cops slip you anything you don't want to hold. This is a free country, ain't it? Yes! Well, then, help yourself! We're as good as any of these tight-wad capitalists, an' if they get messy about it, we'll prove that we're a little better. Shall we bust up their shops if they don't pay us a livin' wage? Hock your shoes an' get a bet down on that! Direct action—that's the only dope. I'm the direct-action kid, I am! I'll fight for the right as long as there's a bite left in my teeth. Who's with me?"

"From what them people in the hall said out loud, it seemed like she had considerable company. I turned around to speak with the professor, but he's gone, an' so I ask a guy standin' near who the lady with the tough and ugly tongue is.

"Her name's Belle Macey," the guy tells me. 'Stranger here. Just turned up since the strike started. She'd make a bum Quakeress, wouldn't she?"

"The lady had the power on again by then, an' buh-lieve me, she was just pickin' 'em up an' layin' 'em down. She was as strong on that free an' equal stuff as the professor himself. To hear her tell it, she hated anybody that was better than anybody else.

"She stopped for brimstone, an' then I see the professor. He hopped out o' the crowd right onto the platform alongside her, an' begun roastin' the rich where she left off. I told you he'd picked up some tough talk while he'd been with me? Yes! Well, he used all he knew. The lady was bad enough, but he was worse.



"'Good night!' pipes up a shy-browed guy alongside me that looked like the real reason for jails. 'I don't mind mixin' it with a cop now an' again, but I'd hate to meet that guy alone in the dark when I had a dollar an' he didn't!'"

"The professor sure did sound bad! He was actin' a part, you see, an', o' course, the real thing is never as true to life as an actor. He hammered everybody that wasn't busted, an' then, after he got done an' was shakin' hands with the tough-tongued, black-eyed sister that didn't like anybody who amounted to anything either, the bunch voted never to work again for less 'n twice what they were worth, an' the meetin' broke up.

"So did the professor. The way that man acted, you'd think he just discovered the earth.

"Ah, this is practical!" he says to me when we was alone. 'At last we are in service,' he says. 'To-morrow we march with banners,' he says, 'crying aloud the wrongs of these poor people. We shall fight their battle to the finish,' he says.

"'I'll stick with you to the finish,' I tell him; 'but I'm goin' to finish before I begin. The battle is over right now, as far as I'm concerned. Why should I fight,' I says to him, 'an' get pinched an' do time 'cause these needle-herders are on a vacation? You're as nutty,' I says to him, 'as that lady that don't talk like one.'

"Ah, Miss Macey!" the professor raves. 'A wonderful woman! Marvellous! So vital!'

"If she talks that tough in public, just imagine the things she could think up to call a husband,' I says.

"Hers is the voice of the common people,' the professor says; 'crude, but strong.'

"She'd make a nice wife for a buzz-saw,' I says.

"She is genuine,' the professor alibis her. 'A rude tongue may voice an immortal truth,' he says. 'Did you think my speech to-night sufficiently ungram-

matical to deceive my auditors? Did I give any hint of my true identity?'

"You weren't as bad as the Macey outbreak,' I tell him; 'but outside of her there's nothin' between here an' solitary in Dannemora that could talk worse than you done.'

"I'm glad!" the professor says. 'Miss Macey is so truly part and parcel of the life I am endeavoring to simulate that I was afraid she would recognize the deception. Miss Macey an' I,' he says, 'are to work together for the good of the cause.'

"I'm no chemist, but there's one explosive I know how to mix, an' that's trouble. I'll tip you the trick. It's this—take anything, an' add a woman. Blooie! As long as the professor had nothin' on his mind but insanity, I figured he might age out of his misery with the years, an' grow up to be a pleasure to himself; but the minute he took up with this Macey woman, I could smell the flowers on his grave.

# V

"I WOULDN'T monkey with him an' his strike. Not me! I had about three weeks to stick around before my contract run out, an' I could get my money; so I get me a job swamin' out in a D. T. parlor while the professor done somethin' for humanity.

"He was a busy little headache-powder durin' that strike. I didn't see much of him, but I heard a lot. Him an' the Macey woman got particular mention in the reports o' the trouble, both newspaper an' police. They were the man an' woman o' mystery. Neither one of 'em had ever been heard of in Seattle until then, an' the question before the house was:

"Who are these bugs?'

"They were both pinched, an' let loose, an' interviewed, an' roasted, till they were a public pair. They could 'a' got big time in vaudeville if they'd wanted it, or the same thing in the State pen if they'd got what 'most everybody

else in town wanted 'em to have. They had less friends! The garment-workers who were on strike liked 'em as little as any other class. They figured like this:

"If these two shinin' lights would just go out, we could sneak back to work in the dark, an' get acquainted with the pay-envelope again; but as long as they glow, we're ashamed to."

"The outside agitators that started the thing were sore on 'em 'cause they'd stole all the publicity. The officials of the union had never been strong for the strike, an' they figured that if the professor an' the Macey lady was out o' the way, they could wind it up peaceful an' decent. So they're sore, too. The whole town was sick, an' them two were the disease."

"I know there's a blow-off due, so when a messenger-boy comes into the saloon one night an' tells me to follow him, I do so, thinkin' I'm on the way to the morgue to identify the remains. I'm wrong. He leads me to one o' the swellest hotels in the city. I get through the lobby somehow, without attractin' the notice o' the house detective, an' the kid leads me up-stairs to the door of a room, on which he hammers. Somebody says, 'Come in!' an' I do. There's the professor, all dolled up in a new suit of clothes an' a shave, an' lookin' sadder than ever."

"I have returned to the world," he says to me. "I communicated with a friend in a near-by city who put me in funds. I leave to-night," he says, "for New York."

"Well, what about the strike?" I ask him.

"Haven't you heard?" he says, in a tone o' voice like that of a wrinkled trombone blown by a consumptive amateur. "The strike is over. I have failed," he says. "The strikers voted to return to work. They expelled Miss Macey and myself from the hall. They called us alien disturbers," he says. "It was terrible!"

"You may live through it," I says,

tryin' to cheer him up. "What's a strike more or less in a lifetime?"

"I'm in deep trouble," he says. "I have fallen desperately, hopelessly in love with Miss Macey."

"Trouble is right," I says, "if you're goin' to hook up with her—"

"Ah, but I can't!" he says, like a man goin' down for the third time. "Heaven help me, I can't!"

"Then where's the trouble?" I ask him. "A man that can't tie up with her should celebrate, not moan."

"You don't understand," he says. "She's the dearest, sweetest, most lovable girl in the whole wide world, but—ah!" he says, "what a cad I am! To think," he says, "that I dare not marry her, merely because her speech is coarse! To think that I should give up the woman I love, because her manners are not such as obtain in my world! The cruelty of it!" he says. "But could I introduce her to my mother? Would my sisters recognize her? Would my friends overlook her crudities?"

"And could you stand her as a steady thing?" I tacks on my little bit. "You could not. She's a tasty dash o' pepper," I says, "but she'd be a terrible diet!"

"But I love her," he says.

"Yes," I says, "but not well enough to listen to her eat three times a day. She's not your kind, professor," I says to him. "You're nutty, but you're nice, an' she ain't."

"She is!" he says.

"She's not," I says. "Not the way you are. If you married her an' she run off with your best friend, you might be able to overlook the play an' take her back," I says; "but if you married her an' she played tootletywhoop-blub-blug on the noodle soup when company was in at dinner, you'd have to get a divorce," I says.

"I took her in my arms," he says. "We plighted our troth. Only this night," he says, "I kissed her! She loves me," he says, "an' I am not man enough to stay an' marry her!"

"He was runnin' out on the lady. He was leavin' for the East on the midnight train, an' didn't have the sand to go tell her it was off. I didn't blame him. He give me the money that was comin' to me, an' I went to the train with him. There was a lady at the ticket-window when we got there, an' when she turned around the professor let out a whoop.

"Belle!" he says. "My sweetheart!"

"It was Belle all right, but you'd never have known it first look. She was all dolled up as nifty as a first-class shop-lifter.

"Don't follow me, Henry," she says. "I am leaving," she says. "My heart is breaking, but I must go. I didn't have the courage to tell you," she says.

"But I was going," the professor says. "I am leaving to-night, and—"

"Henry!" she wails. "Without telling me? Oh, how could you?"

"I am not what I seem," he says. "I have deceived you. I am not the uneducated tramp I have tried to appear. I am a man of wealth and family," he says. "I am Professor Pettigrew of—"

"Oh, Henry!" she whoops. "Of Sharrock? Why," she says, "my brother studied with you—George Macey. I am—"

"Not George's sister, the settlement worker?" the professor says.

"Yes," she says, grabbin' him by the neck. "Oh, Henry!" she says. "I loved you so, but I thought you really were common; and all the time you were only pretending, just as I was!" she says.

"Oh, Belle!" he says.

"Oh, Henry!" she says.

"Well, that's all right. But listen—about a year later I'm in New York, an' I'm goin' up by Carnegie Hall one day an' see the professor billed for a spiel entitled, 'My Life in the Underworld.'

"Fine!" I says to myself. "I'll mooch me the price of a ticket an' give the old boy some attention."

"I done so, an' he come out on the stage all done up in the black an' white, an' told all about how he'd lived as a bum,

an' what fine people he found that didn't bathe regular, an' how a man was a man whether he was a baron or a bohunk. Oh, the professor always could talk! After the ballyhoo was over, I ducked around to the stage door to give him the up-an'-down. He come out with his wife—her that had been the tough strike-leader in Seattle—an' some friends, an' I slipped him the mitt.

"B-r-r-r-r! I always did hate the cold.

"Oh, but my good man," he says, "you must understand—"

"I do," I says. "I get you. I'm in as wrong here as you were the day I first lamped you under the railroad-bridge."

"Some other time," he says, kind of ashamed. "I have guests now. When we can talk privately," he says.

"I'm on!" I says. "I'm a nice guy, but not here," I says. "You're right," I says to him, "dead right. But why bull the boobs with the other stuff?"

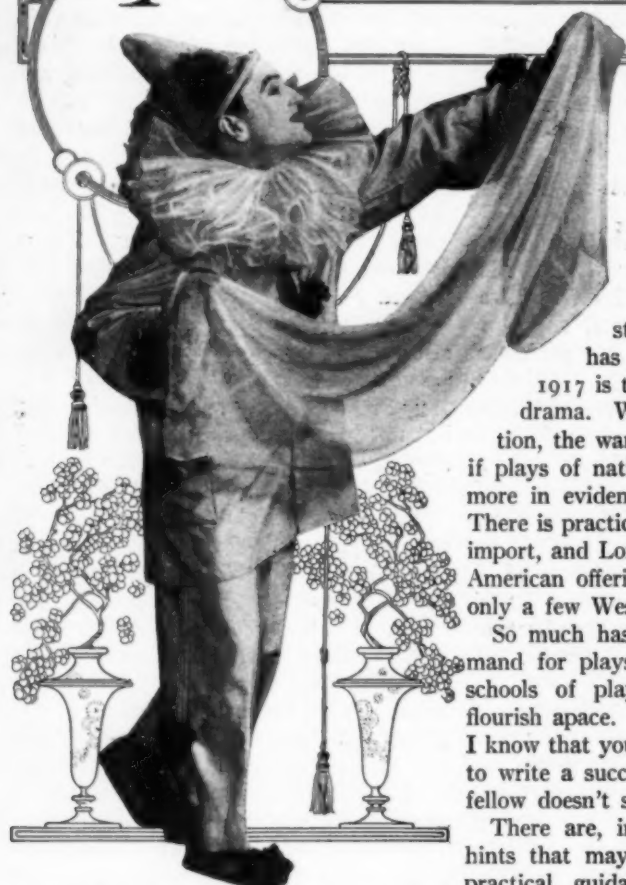
"An' he was right—what I mean. I may be just as good a potato as he is a tulip; but that don't get me put in a cut-glass vase on the mantelpiece, you know. We both grew out o' the same dirt, but I get fried in the kitchen with the onions, an' they put him in water to smell. I ain't kickin', you know. If I'm a potato, I belong in the skillet; an' the guy that tries to make a suitable present to his lady friend out o' me ought to share a cell with the professor in Matteawan. Free an' equal! A hickory-nut ain't as free as an eagle, bo; an' it wouldn't better matters any to graft the bird onto a twig an' give the nut wings. A nut's made to drop, not fly; an' an eagle ain't built to hang from a limb all its life.

"A cabbage ain't equal to an orchid; neither is an orchid equal to a cabbage. If one don't look well in the parlor, the other don't taste good with the boiled dinner.

"Free an' equal! I'm free to do whatever I can get away with, an' equal to the guy that can't do more. What of it?"

# The STAGE

by  
Matthew  
White, Jr.



GREGORY KELLY AS PIERROT IN "THE MOON LADY," AS PLAYED BY THE PORTMANTEAU THEATER COMPANY

*From a photograph by White, New York*

## A YEAR OF AMERICAN DRAMA

**I**N my last year's forecast I stated that the coming season would perforce see authors of the United States well to the fore. The outcome has justified the prediction. All the hits of 1915-1916, with the exception of "Justice," were of American make.

Now the Drama League of America—

grown to influential proportions since its modest start in Evanston, Illinois—has officially declared that 1917 is to be American year in the drama. With or without such sanction, the war being still on, it looks as if plays of native manufacture would be more in evidence even than last season. There is practically nothing from Paris to import, and London has run so largely to American offerings that we can draw on only a few West End successes.

So much has been said about the demand for plays that the correspondence schools of play-writing may expect to flourish apace. Of course you know and I know that you can't teach a novice how to write a successful play, but the other fellow doesn't seem to know it.

There are, indeed, certain elementary hints that may help those in search of practical guidance in the building of drama. For instance, Augustus Thomas told the Playwrights' Club at the second annual dinner of that organization:

In a four-act play there are, on an average, twenty-two thousand words. Spare a word wherever possible. Make every one you use count. If you wish one man to tell another to leave the room, you could have him say:

"You leave this room."

It would be better to make it:

"Leave this room."

Better still, reduce it simply to:

"Go!"

Best of all, have him simply point to the door and say not one word.



Mr. Thomas likewise laid special stress on the importance of stirring some emotion in the audience.

Unless you do that, you have written in vain. And be sure to make your audience acquainted with your characters before you expect it to be interested in what happens to them. This was the fault with Winchell Smith's "Only Son." It had no first act.

Another thing. If you want applause at the end of your third act, in a four-act play, or at

the close of the second in a three-act play, try to end your act with an upward rather than a downward trend. In other words, so contrive that you give your audience what they hope will happen.

Two years ago one new American writer came to the front—Elmer L. Reizenstein, author of "On Trial." Last year two—Cleaves Kinkead with "Common Clay" and Max Marcin with "The House of Glass"—were put in the reckoning; and if we include one-act pieces, Lewis Beach, with "The Clod," should certainly be added to make a third. Will the 1916-1917 record beat this in the line of real discoveries? That's what it must do if it is to be a real American-drama year.

But say what you will, the poor old drama, after many rude buffetings and several lean seasons, is just now in the ascendent. Managers no longer take to their heels at sight of the persistent playwright. Rather they are making a bid for him. In the New York newspapers of an early June Sunday, column-length articles requested authors of one-act plays to send their manuscripts to May Tully, at the



NANCY WINTON AND WILMOT HERTLAND IN "NEVERTHELESS," AT THE PORTMANTEAU THEATER

*From a photograph by White, New York*

Palace Theater, where she proposes to inaugurate a season in stock productions of playlets that are really worth while.

Meantime the difficulties of the movies, of which I had something to tell you last October, seem to be increasing as the problem of scenario supply grows more acute. Two months ago

Jesse L. Lasky

issued a statement to the effect that "the producers of motion-pictures have suddenly found themselves at a standstill." And he lays it all at the feet of the scenario writer.

"I am inclined to agree," he went on, "that they are not well enough paid, but they are receiving full value for the material they are turning out at present. I predict that when dramatists give us real plays—plays that will live on the screen, and that the public will want to see more than once—the producers will gladly pay by outright purchase or royalties sums that will satisfy the most exacting demands of our greatest writers."

Aye, there's the rub. Will they? And even if they will, what author is there who would not prefer to see his brain-child set forth in flesh and blood behind the footlights rather than to look at the shadowed reflection of it, mute, upon the screen?

"We don't want railroad accidents or leaps from cliffs," Hector Turnbull, of the Lasky scenario department, told me. "But suppose an author has an idea for a play of strong emotional appeal, a play that he would consider good enough to send to any of the Broadway managers—let him sit



KATHERINE GALLOWAY, A NEWCOMER TO THE STAGE, WHO WAS THE PRIMA DONNA IN "MOLLY O"

*From a photograph by Morrison, New York*



MARJORIE RAMBEAU AND CYRIL KEIGHTLEY IN THE NEW PLAY  
"CHEATING CHEATERS"

*From a photograph by White, New York*

down and dictate a seven-page or eight-page synopsis, and mail it here."

"But," I objected, "should you take it, he would lose all chance of the very much larger amount that he might make if it were produced upon the speaking stage and registered a success."

"Ah!" came back Mr. Turnbull. "Consider, though, what labor he would

have been spared in not being obliged to think up and write out all the dialogue that would be necessary to outfit a regular drama."

Can you beat that? As if playwrights did not revel in the writing of dialogue! Besides, who would begrudge the time and brains spent in writing three acts, with the prospect that these might bring

one in the money accruing to a Reizenstein, an Earl Derr Biggers, or an Avery Hopwood, and remembering that after a successful play has run its Broadway course there are the royalties from the road, from stock, and from motion-pictures? Beside such golden possibilities, how paltry seems the Famous Players' offer of one thousand dollars apiece for a hundred approved scenarios!

If you think, then, that you have any real talent for play-writing, try the speaking stage first. Even if your work gets a production and fails, the movies are still left for you, for nearly all the fiascos of yesteryear have since been seen on the screen. So why should you give up several thousands in the bush for the sake of a paltry five hundred in the hand, when you might get the lesser reward in any case after you have had your try at the greater one?

In New York, the capital of American stageland, there are now twenty-four producing managers, with thirty-two theaters to house their plays. Nearly all of them, with the exception of the Charles Frohman Company, are planning to offer strictly American goods during the coming year.

To date, Oliver Morosco has the most titles in line for presentation, namely, seven. As I am concerned at present with what Broadway is likely to see for the first time, I include "So Long Letty," a comedy by Mr. Morosco himself and Elmer Harris, with music by Earl Carroll, to say nothing of the elongated Charlotte Granville as its bright, particular light. Thirty weeks' run in three Pacific coast cities, and many months in Chicago, constitute the proud record of this show—which, of course, is no guarantee that it will not bite the dust when it opens in New York, at one of the Shubert theaters, on October 9.

If it should do so, the same people have up their sleeve another on similar lines—"Canary Cottage," recently tried out in Los Angeles with such promising material in the cast as Trixie Friganza, Herbert

Corthell, Lawrence Wheat, and Charles Ruggles, of "Rolling Stones" fame. Yet another musical work on the Morosco stocks is "Salmagundi," by the late Elbert Hubbard, with score by Enrico Caruso, who needs no introduction as a singer, but who has not yet won fame as a composer.

But I should apologize, I suppose, for opening a forecast with an enumeration of pieces having a leaning toward "Tin Pan Alley," so I forthwith switch to Mr. Morosco's dramatic promises. These include a new comedy, "Bonnie," by Mrs. Maravene Thompson, the novelist, who, if she can write dialogue as cleverly as she can talk it, does not need to worry about not making a hit.

Then Edward Childs Carpenter, whose first success, "The Cinderella Man," ran until late in June, is doing another, while Maude Fulton, who made her reputation dancing with William Rock, has shifted her talents upward from her feet to her head and turned out "The Brat," a play about a street waif—which, one would think, must needs be mighty carefully handled not to seem trite. Morosco also has "Spangles," a circus play by Nellie Revelle, herself to the sawdust born, as it were, and "Up-stairs and Down," by those indefatigable writers, Mr. and Mrs. Hatton.

Mr. Morosco's home is in Los Angeles, where he has two theaters in which to try out new plays. His big hits to date are "Peg o' My Heart," "The Bird of Paradise," "The Unchastened Woman," and "The Cinderella Man." He also controls the Pallas brand of motion-pictures. Sad experience has taught him that practically every play submitted and found worth production must first be rewritten.

A. H. Woods is another manager with an all-American layout. There's the farce, "Thirty Days," by A. E. Thomas, formerly dramatic critic on the New York *Sun*, and Clayton Hamilton, who lectures on the art of play-writing at Columbia University. These young men have al-



ready collaborated on "The Big Idea," a clever and original comedy which the critics accepted two years ago, but the people wouldn't. There's an ingenious idea back of their new venture, too. Its title recalls, on the one hand, a ghastly failure—the big melodrama, "Ninety Days," by William Gillette—and, on the other, the enormous success, "Seven Days," the farce by Avery Hop-



ALLYN KING AT  
LEFT AND INA  
CLAIRE AT RIGHT,  
OF THE ZIEGFELD  
FOLLIES

*From photographs  
by White,  
New York*



wood and Mary Roberts Rinehart, based on the latter's story, "When a Man Marries."

Frederic and Fanny Hatton, of Chicago, authors of "Years of Discretion," have written for Woods a comedy in four acts, which they call "The Squab Farm." It has nothing to do with either pigeons or agriculture, but invades a field that should offer boundless opportunities to the

dramatist with a keen sense of the ridiculous—that of moving pictures in the making.

"Cheating Cheaters," by Max Marcin, author of "The House of Glass," is another Woods entry, to be acted by an exceptionally capable cast headed by Willard Mack's wife, Marjorie Rambeau. Of this actress Oliver Morosco predicted in 1912 that she would make New York sit up and take notice when the East saw her—a predic-

tion that was verified the season before last, when she played at the Longacre in her husband's ill-fated "So Much for So Much."

Willard Mack, by the way, has written for Woods a new one, "King, Queen, and Jack," which sounds as though it ought to be put out by Frazee, with the latter's penchant for card titles, as witness his "A Pair of Sixes," "A Full House," and "A Pair of Queens." A farce by Lawrence Rising, utilizing the Dolly Sisters as twins to the utter



PEGGY HYLAND, IN MOTION-PICTURES WITH THE VITAGRAPH COMPANY

*From a photograph by Ageda, New York*

confusion of a bridegroom on "His Bridal Night," will be one of the earliest of the Woods showings on Broadway, having already had a week in Washington.

In the early spring there was a rumor that Mr. Woods had discovered three excellent acts in as many different plays, offered him by three different authors under the respective titles of "The Promise," "The Chain," and "Think It Over." The Woods press-agent thereupon got busy and announced that his chief, having prevailed upon the three authors to see the thing his way, was having the three good acts made into one good play.

Curious as it sounded, we might have believed the report had not the pressman aforesaid gone one step too far and added that Robert Edeson, Thomas A. Wise, and Robert Warwick had already been engaged for the piece. The day may come when the lion will lie down with the lamb, but I don't expect ever to see the night when these three will agree to share the electric sign.

Selwyn & Co. also specialize on American offerings—as well they may, when they have right in the family two such clever playwrights as Edgar Selwyn and his wife, Margaret Mayo. The latter's new one is a farce, which must go

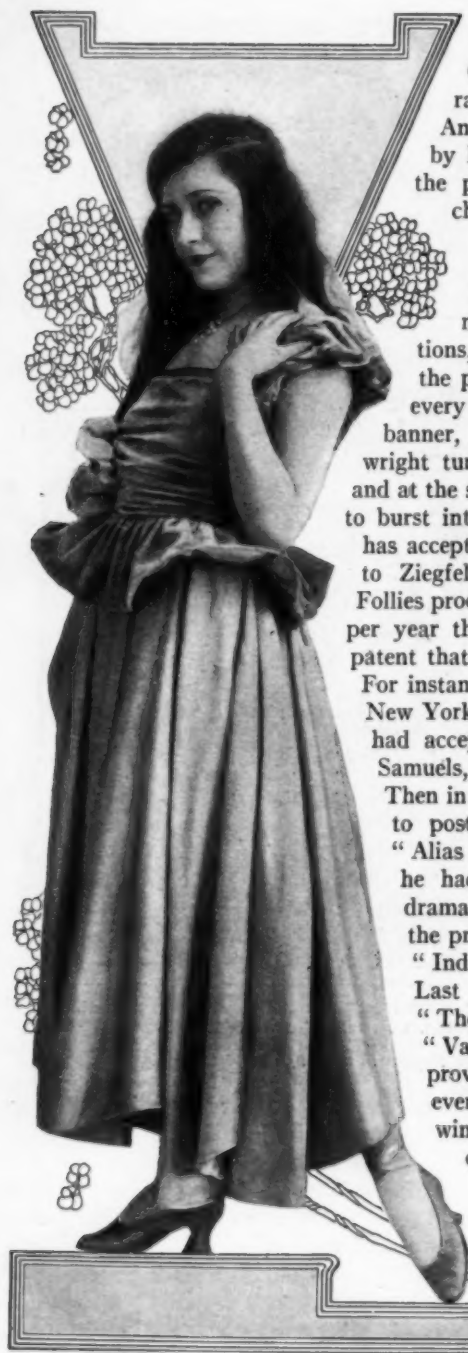
some to be funnier than her "Baby Mine" and "Twin Beds." Her husband's is a comedy, "The Double Cure," featuring Lewis S. Stone, a Pacific coast player introduced to New York in "The Bird of Paradise."

For the Selwyns, too, Avery Hopwood has written "Just for To-night" as a vehicle for Margaret Illington—a contrast, apparently, to the strong emotional work that she has been doing for the past two seasons in "The Lie." Another



LOLA MAY, WHO IS QUEEN EUGENIE IN THE THOMAS H. INCE SPECTACULAR WAR FILM, "CIVILIZATION"

*From a photograph by Wituel, Los Angeles*



BETH LYDY, LEADING WOMAN WITH LEW FIELDS AS WINNIE WILLOUGHBY IN  
THE MUSICAL COMEDY "STEP THIS WAY"

From a photograph by Apeda, New York

Selwyn possibility is Ralph Renaud's "Betty Behave," a comedy, with Jane Cowl released at last from the "sob sister" ranks.

Another underline for the Selwyns is a play by Roi Cooper Megrue and Irvin Cobb, with the prosaic title of "John W. Blake." The character of the piece has not yet been disclosed, but the chief rôles are to fall to Janet Beecher and George Nash.

If we are to believe all the announcements relative to David Belasco's productions, he would deserve the ranking position as the purveyor of American drama. For just as every actor is anxious to enroll under the Belasco banner, so do the thoughts of the embryo playwright turn to the wizard of Forty-Fourth Street, and at the slightest hint of encouragement he is likely to burst into print with the glad tidings that D. B. has accepted "my first." As a matter of fact, next to Ziegfeld, who confines himself to an annual Follies production, Belasco puts forth fewer offerings per year than any other leading manager, so it is patent that he cannot make good on all these hopes. For instance, as far back as the 5th of January the New York newspapers proclaimed that Mr. Belasco had accepted "The Florentine," by Maurice V. Samuels, for early production as "The Wanderer." Then in April came the news that he had decided to postpone the *première* of Willard Mack's "Alias Santa Claus" until next season; also that he had signed to stage Mrs. Amy Abbott's drama of Chinese life, "Bin T'Ang," and that the prolific Chicago Hattons had sold him their "Indestructible Wife."

Last season he made but two productions—"The Boomerang," which is still running, and "Vanderdecken," for Warfield. The latter proved to be so weak a vessel that it was eventually beached, and during the coming winter this star will fall back on a revival of "The Music Master."

One of the fairly sure things in the Belasco horoscope is a new comedy for



Frances Starr, "Little Lady in Blue," by Horace Hodges and T. Wigney Percyval, authors of "Grumpy," which has already had its preliminary showing in Atlantic City. "The Lucky Fellow," a farce by Roi Cooper Megrue, has also been tried for an April week in Washington. It has been re-

It is said to be a melodrama of anywhere from twenty-four to thirty-five scenes, located in or near the heart of New York, at the corner of Broadway and Forty-Second Street. So elaborate are the sets that their preparation took three months' work.

Another native offering by K. & E. will be the Manhattan



LUCILLE CAVANAGH, DANCING WITH GEORGE WHITE IN VAUDEVILLE

*From a photograph by Maffett, Chicago*

named "Seven Chances," opens at the Cohan Theater in August, and is Mr. Belasco's only American offering that has got really under way; for Messrs. Hodges and Percyval are both English.

Thoroughly American will be the Klaw & Erlanger production of Bayard Veiller's latest, at present known as "Danger."

showing of "Pollyanna," the "glad play" by Catherine Chiselm Cushing, from the stories by Eleanor H. Porter. For this, judging by its reception in Boston and Chicago, the managers are anticipating another "Daddy Long-Legs" furor. Patricia Collinge, who used to be lead with Douglas Fairbanks when he was on

speaking terms with his public, has the name-part, and the play may already be housed at the Hudson when you read these lines.

For Elsie Ferguson, Klaw & Erlanger have secured a comedy, "The Sealed Valley," by Hulbert Footner, author of "Thieves' Wit," the serial now running in this magazine. The play is one of smart society, with its scenes laid among the fashionable set on Long Island, and for Miss Ferguson it should prove a gratifying contrast to the atmosphere of "Margaret Schiller."

After her London triumphs with "Peg," Laurette Taylor comes back to us in another comedy by her husband, Hartley Manners. It is called "The Wooing of Eve," and was first tried in Rochester on the 23rd of March last. Among the other cities that have already seen it are Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh, and it goes without saying the K. & E. will be pretty sure of the vehicle's ability to fill the shoes of the wonderful "Peg" before definitely announcing the Broadway premiere.

The other day I saw Mr. Erlanger and Charles B. Dillingham lunching together. Dillingham ought to be able to get anything he wants in the booking line these days from the chief of the syndicate. Starting in as a newspaperman—he was at one time dramatic critic of the *New York Evening Sun*—he has mounted the rungs of the managerial ladder swiftly. The season before last he engineered the biggest hit of the year with Montgomery & Stone in "Chin-Chin"; but this was as nothing to his accomplishment of 1915-1916, when he turned the former deficits of the Hippodrome into cash as cold and hard as the frozen surface of the big tank that did so much for his success there.

Now he has tackled a still bigger proposition in undertaking, in association with F. Ziegfeld, Jr., to put the Century Theater in the paying column. He has had three predecessors who failed at the job—Winthrop Ames, when the house was the

New Theater; George Tyler, representing Liebler & Co.; and Ned Wayburn, who made the most spectacular collapse of the lot. At this writing it is too early to know just what Messrs. Dillingham and Ziegfeld intend doing at the beautiful temple of Thespis on Central Park West, but be sure it will be something unique served in the best style, for has not Joseph Urban been retained as chief art director?

The Century will not be opened until some time in October. Meanwhile Mr. Dillingham will start things at the Hippodrome on September 4 with a brand-new show, of whose nature I can only tell you now that the dancer Pavlowa will be a part of it, with Bakst as costume-designer. Two of his American offerings will be Marie Dressler in a comedy, "Sweet Genevieve," by James Forbes, and Frank McIntyre in "Fast and Grow Fat," founded on the story "Five Fridays." Raymond Hitchcock will be starred in a musical piece, "Betty," from the London Daly's, and there are rumors that Mr. Dillingham has enticed Marguerite Clark and Hazel Dawn away from the films.

Speaking of films, William A. Brady has experienced a change of heart. Something like a year ago he was lamenting the damage that the movies had done to the legitimate. Now he is singing another tune. In March last he was quoted as saying that "the spoken drama is coming back. Millions of theatergoers throughout the country are demanding that actors and actresses shall come to their stages in person."

Mr. Brady, who is strongly interested in screen products himself, was careful to add that this did not mean that the vogue of the film was waning, but that in these days of keen competition only the best pictures could stand the test. He announced at the same time that he would atone for his idleness of 1915-1916 by producing six plays before June 1.

Among these was "Little Comrade," the war story by Burton E. Stevenson, which appeared in this magazine in Jan-



MARIE DORO, WHO HAS LEFT THE SPEAKING STAGE TO ACT FOR THE LASKY FEATURE FILM COMPANY IN PICTURES

*From a copyrighted photograph by Hartsook, Los Angeles*

uary of last year. "Counting the Cost," by George Broadhurst, and a new one by Owen Davis were also included in his list, but up to the present I can find record of only "The Man Who Came Back," by Jules Eckert Goodman, as having actually reached the footlights. This last piece is based on a story by John Fleming Wilson.

Grace George, Mr. Brady's wife, will continue her interesting plan of repertoire at the Playhouse. So far as I can learn, however, she has had small success with her offer of a

production to any college man who sends her a suitable play. As a matter of fact, your author is not particularly keen to have his script fall into the hands of a repertory company, such as Miss George takes pride in maintaining. Say what one will about the evils thereof, he is always hoping for the long run.

Langdon Mitchell, the American author of "The New York Idea," with a revival of which Miss George inaugurated her enterprise last autumn, has written an important offering for the coming season. This is nothing less than the new vehicle for John Drew, which will show him, for the first time in twenty-four years, under other than Frohman auspices. He has gone over to John D. Will-



*From her latest photograph by Sarony, New York*

MIRIAM COLLINS, LEADING WOMAN WITH WILLIAM HODGE IN HIS NEW AMERICAN PLAY, PRESUMABLY WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, "FIXING SISTER"





MAY ALLISON, WITH THE METRO FILM COMPANY IN MOTION-PICTURES

*From a photograph by Sarony, New York*

iams, formerly of the Frohman offices, latterly known to the public as the American producer of "Justice."

Mr. Drew's new manager has selected for his star a dramatization by Mr. Mitchell of Thackeray's "Pendennis," to be known as "Major Pendennis," with Drew, of course, in the title-rôle. It was Langdon Mitchell who adapted "Becky Sharp" from "Vanity Fair" for Mrs. Fiske, and I am looking forward to the new piece with high expectation.

As to the plans of the Charles Frohman Company, in adhering to the policy followed by "C. F." himself, native plays

are very much in the minority. In fact, I find only one in the entire list sent out from the office in June. This is a new comedy, "Mr. Antonio," written for Otis Skinner by Booth Tarkington.

By the time you read these lines Ann Murdock will probably be appearing at the Lyceum in "Please Help Emily," an English comedy by H. M. Harwood which had a considerable run last winter at a London theater. Maude Adams will have the new play, also with a West End record behind it, "A Kiss for Cinderella," by Sir James Barrie.

The story turns on the fact that the

leading woman is suspected of being a spy because she chances to know a few words of German.

For the rest, the Frohman announcements involve Ethel Barrymore in a dual rôle in a play never given before anywhere, and Blanche Bates in a drama being written for her by William Somerset Maugham. The same author's light comedy, "Caroline"—a feature of last winter's West End season, with Irene Vanbrugh in the leading part—is to furnish Margaret Anglin with a starring vehicle. "Our Betters" is yet another Maugham play on the Frohman roster.

The item on which most stress is laid in the Shubert announcement is the fact that the firm is to have twelve New York theaters, three having been added to the nine it already controlled. The Shuberts recently took over the Astor from Cohan & Harris, and are building two new ones in West Forty-Fifth Street—the Apollo, and a house to be devoted to French productions.

The only definitely named American offerings I find thus far in their list are, first, a dramatization by Eugene Walter of John Fox's novel, "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," and, second, a farce by Mark Swan, "Somebody's Luggage," serving to bring James T. Powers back to the boards. I suppose I should also include "Fixing Sister," for William Hodge, which ran for some weeks in Boston last spring.

From England the Shuberts expect a new comedy by Alfred Sutro, whose "Two Virtues" served Sothorn last autumn, while from Germany they will import a perfect raft of musical pieces, which I haven't the space to name. Their Comedy Theater is now in charge of the Washington Square Players, who are open to receive one-act plays—another chance for the American playwright.

America predominates, too, in the offerings at the Portmanteau Theater, that unique traveling enterprise whose first season proved signally successful. Never need the players on this tiny yet

complete portable stage worry lest only a beggarly array of filled benches should greet their view when the curtain rises. So great is the reputation already achieved by Stuart Walker's "theater that comes to you" that advance bookings are constantly being made with clubs, societies, universities, smart-set functions, and so on. The Portmanteau Theater company will play a New York season of two months, starting in the middle of November. They need not trouble themselves about finding a house open to receive them, as their stage can be set up in any hall twenty-four feet wide, eighteen feet deep, and sixteen and one-half high.

There will be many more American plays brought out during the coming theatrical year than I have the space to enumerate here. For instance, Fred Jackson, author of that capital farce of two seasons ago, "A Full House," will be represented by two comedies—"Baa, Baa, Black Sheep," featuring the producer, William Elliott, and Olive Wyndham, and "Losing Eloise." Nor should I omit "Mr. Lazarus," by Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford, which, judging by its Chicago reception, seems to have done as much for Henry E. Dixey as their "Dummy" did for Ernest Truex.

John Hazard, the actor, has collaborated with Winchell Smith, co-author of "The Boomerang," on a farce called "Turn to the Right." Time has been reserved at the Astor for "His Majesty Bunker Bean," a play which the clever acting of Taylor Holmes kept in the Chicago Loop for many weeks last winter. It is a dramatization by Lee Wilson Dodd of a story by Harry Leon Wilson.

The two dramatic attractions that survived the summer in New York—"The Boomerang" and "Fair and Warmer"—were both of American make. For the rest, there were the Ziegfeld Follies with their Urban scenery, Lew Fields in "Step This Way," "Very Good Eddie" at the Casino, and "The Passing Show," enlivened by a timely infusion of the military, at the Winter Garden.

# Children of Passion<sup>\*</sup>



by Mary Imlay Taylor

## XXIII

HESTER stepped back from the window, deeply flushed.

"Don't move!" she said to Laura in a low voice. "Don't go near the window. Barhyte's here!"

Laura stopped in her mad packing and looked up, aghast.

"Has he seen you?"

"Yes," Hester replied slowly; "he saw me. He's come here after Leonard!"

The two girls looked at each other; something hard and unyielding showed in Laura's face.

"He must have followed me—" She hesitated; then she threw back her head angrily. "Leonard deserves it—he's a traitor!"

"He may deserve it, but"—Hester shuddered—"Laura, we've got to save him!"

Laura's white lips twisted themselves into harder lines. All the passion and agony of the last hours had been drowned in mortification, in the certainty that she had been a mere dupe, a laughing-stock. She had no pity left in her.

"I'm going home!" she said.

"You can't go down-stairs and see George Barhyte." Hester caught at her arm. "Don't you know you can't?"

Laura gave her an angry look; their faces, close together, were both vivid with passion.

"I don't care!" she gasped.

"He'll say that you came here with Leonard. You know how he hates him, and you can't prove you didn't!"

The young girl stood sullenly.

"The people here know better," she said.

"They won't right you. Laura, stay here! I'll see Barhyte. I'll try to save you if I can."

"You mean you'll try to save Leonard!"

"I'll try to save both you and him—though I don't believe I can. Promise me you'll stay here!"

"I can't promise anything."

"Laura, you must! George is changed; he isn't what he used to be. He's like a bloodhound! It means death—do you want to feel that you've murdered Leonard?"

Laura suddenly burst into tears. Hester did not speak again, and the girl sank

<sup>\*</sup> Copyright, 1916, by Mary Imlay Taylor—This story began in the June number of MURSEY'S MAGAZINE

down beside the table, weeping, her whole slender frame shaken with deep, shuddering sobs.

For a moment Hester stood looking at her, unmoved; then she went softly out of the room, and, locking the door behind her, put the key into the pocket of her coat. The hotel was quiet, and the narrow, empty hall had only two rows of closed, white doors. She went rapidly to the stairs, listened for an instant, and then descended.

As she thought, Barhyte was in the lower hall. He had just been talking to the clerk at the desk, and he turned sharply as Hester appeared. The wildness of her eyes and the strange color in her face startled him. He had recognized her at the window with sheer amazement, and had just been questioning the clerk.

He was forced to think that she had run away. He could not believe that Nicholson had sent her; if he had, he must be deep in the plot to rescue the murderer. In either case, Hester was here and, in a way, at Barhyte's mercy. He greeted her with elaborate politeness.

"This is an unexpected pleasure!" he exclaimed, holding out his hand, which Hester ignored.

"I want to speak to you," she said in a low voice. "Will you please come in here?"

She opened the door into a small, dim parlor. There was no one there, and she walked over to the window that commanded the one long street of the village. As she reached it, Barhyte came up and, tossing his hat and stick on a chair, faced her with composure.

For a moment they looked at each other, involuntarily measuring strength. She was aware of something almost brutal in the triumph in his face, but she would not abandon her desperate attempt to save Leonard. The alternative, the leaving of it all to fate, made her shudder.

"I know why you've come," she began with difficulty, her voice almost inaudible. "You're here to take Leonard back!"

He nodded, smiling, but his smile was

only a mockery. The intense rage he had nursed against the two Nicholsons—whose victim he believed himself to be—had reached a climax.

Hester controlled herself with an effort.

"I suppose it's useless to beg you to be merciful, to let him go?"

"Why should I? He had no mercy for me. He let me suffer nine months in prison for him!"

"But he saved you at the last."

"You forget Ballard—whom he didn't save!"

"I forget nothing, but—" She hesitated; then she took a step forward. "I beg you to spare him, not to use this—this accident of finding him as a means to kill him! It means death to Leonard—can't you remember that, with all that you suffered?"

"That doesn't concern me. He's bound to face trial, and I'm going to see that he does it. I don't see why you women care so much for him. He's a scamp!"

"He's my husband's younger brother."

Barhyte smiled bitterly. It was so evident that he misconstrued even this that Hester's pale face crimsoned.

"You're very hard!" she said passionately. "You've suffered, but you have no mercy for others. It may be just to punish Leonard, but his death in the electric chair would punish others more. George, if you do this—if you betray him—you'll never forgive yourself!"

"There's no betrayal about it. I'm not pledged to shield him. It's only justice—that's all."

"It's your hatred of him. You're making yourself his murderer."

Barhyte shrugged his shoulders.

"On the contrary, I've nothing to do with it now."

Hester caught her breath. Something in his words, his gesture, made her sure that he had actually let the whole matter get beyond his control, that she had touched him, but too late. She drew back against the wall, regarding him with awestruck eyes.

To her the death awaiting Leonard was



vividly terrible. Her own horror of it, and of her husband's determination to enforce the law, had made her release Leonard. Now she saw it returning, a grisly specter, prepared to deal the final blow. And it was her fault; she was sure that detectives had followed either Laura or herself.

She saw, too, the expression of Barhyte's face. She knew what he thought of her being there; but she scorned to defend herself, even if she could have done so without betraying Laura.

## XXIV

BARHYTE, meanwhile, began to walk to and fro, his pale face working. He was convinced now that Hester loved Leonard, and had come here intending to run away with him. He pitied the Ex-Governor; for the first time since Nicholson had refused his appeal for mercy, he relented toward him.

Yet there was another side to it, as Barhyte saw it with a kind of grim fatalism; he had it in his hand to let her escape with Leonard, and so punish the man who had condemned him. But had he? He looked up, and saw outside the window the figure of a man going down to the wharf. In an instant he realized that it was too late, that he was powerless.

Then he was aware of Hester's voice, shaken but sweet—the voice that he remembered as the happiest in the world, but now how changed!

"George, I beg you, I beseech you, to tell me the truth—can you save him now, can you let him go?"

"No!"

She uttered a little involuntary cry.

"You've already betrayed him?"

He turned sharply away.

"Look here, Hester, it isn't betrayal! I'm not bound to him—to the man who made me a prisoner. I'll be honest with you—I wish you didn't care! I went straight to the police with the first clue I got, and we trailed you. There are five detectives here now, and he can't get away from them."

She looked at him, horror-stricken.

"How could you? It's death—certain death! He can't escape!"

"Nor could I!"

"He saved you. He never meant it to go so far. He was weak and—"

"And wicked," finished Barhyte grimly. Hester wrung her hands.

"What can I do? It was all my fault! Oh, it's cruel—cruel! Where are these men?"

He pointed out of the window.

"Watching the river. We came in on your train. You didn't know that?" He laughed bitterly. "You didn't disguise yourself. I saw you get on the train, and so did they."

She did not heed him, but ran out of the room into the hall. She was bare-headed, but she had a wild idea of going down to the river, getting a boat, and warning Leonard. There must be some way!

She was horror-stricken at thought of the imprisonment and trial, with all its awful details of Ballard's death, and—at last—the death-house. She was torn by the reflection that it was her fault, for she had let Laura into the secret. It did not matter now about the French *danseuse*. It was not for Leonard that she cared; she knew now that her feeling of tenderness for him was dead. It was death—death clothed with the awful attributes of shame—that sent her into the street. She must save him!

She ran, hatless, toward the water. She knew what Barhyte thought, and she no longer cared. She could not betray Laura, and she must save Leonard. Perhaps, even now, he could elude his pursuers and escape to some foreign country.

She heard heavy steps behind her, and Barhyte overtook her.

"Hester, for Heaven's sake, come back!" His face was flushed. "The detectives are there, and you can't do a thing. Every newspaper in the country will print the story that you're here to— to save him!"

"As if that mattered!" she cried pas-

sionately. "As if anything mattered but life and death! Ballard is dead—what good is it to kill Leonard now? Why didn't you let him alone? To think of what he has done would have tortured him enough. I must do something to save him—I must!"

Barhyte caught her arm, and pointed with his other hand.

"Hush—look!"

She turned and looked down the street. At first it seemed as if they were alone in the village; only the white wings of a pigeon glanced in the sun before her dazzled vision. There was so much sky, splendidly blue, and then below it the water, swift-flowing, deadly cold. She could see the masts of a little schooner.

"What is it?" she panted, wrenching her arm away. "Let me go! I can't hate as you do."

"I tell you stay!" he retorted hoarsely. "Something has happened, but you can do nothing. Don't let those men see your grief. There—look!"

She took a step forward and stood, her hands wrung tight together. The street was long and white and still. Then, suddenly, while she looked, a crowd began to gather, doors opened, and the houses poured out men and women and children.

The crowd gathered until the wharf, and even the square beside it, became thronged. Strong figures—big-shouldered fishermen and peasant women—seemed as if etched against that patch of placid blue. They moved and pressed closer, darkening at the center.

Hester was conscious that Barhyte spoke again, but his hoarse exclamation scarcely reached her. Her eyes never moved; she continued to watch the people, the curious, swaying, thickening mass, held by them, fascinated.

Presently the crowd parted, heads were bared, and one or two of the Canadian women knelt down on the sidewalk. Half a dozen hardy fishermen were coming, bearing something between them.

"There's been an accident!" Hester cried. Relief shot through her fevered

senses—this was not an arrest! "Some one has been drowned."

The fishermen continued to approach, the people following on either side and behind. It was so still that the tramp of their feet awoke an echo. Then they passed, and Hester gave a strange cry and caught at Barhyte's arm with shaking hands.

"It's Leonard!" she cried sharply. "It's Leonard!"

## XXV

WILLIAM NICHOLSON's private secretary, young John Ashmead, always received the evening newspapers. It had been his habit to glance through them, note the important news, and lay it before the Governor. This custom had survived Nicholson's resignation, for the tumult which had followed his retirement had filled the papers with articles that had to be read, and sometimes answered.

Now, Curwood's passionate attack on the Ex-Governor threatened him with an indictment; he was openly accused of aiding and abetting his half-brother's escape after the murder. He had not defended himself, but had maintained a stubborn silence.

Barhyte's vindication had only added to the clamor, for it had let loose the fury of the released prisoner and his family—fury at the unjust charge, at the long trial, and at the Governor's refusal to grant a reprieve. The press rioted with accusations and counter-accusations, and it was Ashmead's duty to read them and report their substance to Nicholson.

On the evening of that day the private secretary had already looked over the newspapers when the Ex-Governor came home. Nicholson had been detained in New York; he was weary and burdened with the constant thought of Hester. He could get no news of her, but—at a late hour—he had found a trace of her, and he was already determined to start in pursuit.

He must find her, he must bring her back. No matter whether she loved him

or not, it was his duty to protect her, to save her from herself, if he could. He felt the isolation of his position, the lack of sympathy, the loss of love; but none of these things concerned him as deeply as his young wife's safety and good name.

With these thoughts of her, with the horrible certainty that she must have gone to Leonard, he went into the library. It would be necessary to see his mail and sign some letters, and then he must get a night train.

Ashmead was already there, standing beside the table, reading the open sheet of an extra edition. The shaded light shone on his hands and on the printed pages, but his face was in the shadow. At his employer's entrance the young man started violently, and made way for him with such confusion that Nicholson noticed it, and saw that the secretary had laid one newspaper aside. Suspicion—almost a fear—leaped up.

"I leave to-night on a late train for Montreal," he said briefly. "Are there any letters to sign?"

"A few, sir, I—"

Ashmead stopped. Seeing the Ex-Governor's glance at the newspaper, he took it up—he seemed almost to snatch it up; but Nicholson stretched out an imperative hand.

"What is it?" he asked sharply. "Let me see it!"

He expected some violent political attack, or perhaps a scandalous tale of Hester's flight. His secretary handed him the newspaper and turned away, his own face blanched.

Ashmead remembered Hester in the hall that night when Leonard had confessed; ever since he had been sure that she loved the culprit, and his heart had gone out to the Ex-Governor. Now he dared not look at him. He had read the flaring head-lines that told of the discovery of Leonard's hiding-place, of Barhyte and the detectives on the trail, of the tragic death of the fugitive. Not much was known yet of the details, but he had gone out in a naphtha-launch with a French

Canadian *danseuse*, there had been an explosion, and Leonard Nicholson and the young woman, his companion, were both dead.

There followed, with all the unction of the yellow journal, the tale of a reporter who had followed Mrs. William Nicholson in her flight to Canada, and had seen her agony beside the body. The story was easily built up, and hung together in every detail. She had sent money to the murderer, and she had run away from her husband to join him in the flight he had planned to Argentina.

It was well told; an unscrupulous reporter had found a congenial task. Hester's youth, beauty, and high station had not saved her; indeed, they had rather added zest to the scandal. Nicholson had fallen, he was the center of a fierce political conflict, and the opportunity had been too good to miss. The blow that it dealt was a telling one. It tore open his private life and left his home dishonored.

Ashmead had read all this, and he dared not look at the man whom it concerned. He began to arrange the typewritten notes on his desk, and kept his back turned; yet he felt the intense pause, and heard the rustle of the newspaper when Nicholson laid it down.

There was nothing to be said. He longed to express sympathy, but sympathy at such a time was an insult. Then he heard his employer's voice.

"You'll have to see to all these matters here, Ashmead. I must go to-night to bring the—the body home."

"Yes, sir." The secretary turned soberly. "I'll despatch the mail as usual, and I'll"—he hesitated—"I'll see that Curwood gets his answer. Is there"—he met the other's eye reluctantly—"is there anything else I can do?"

Nicholson shook his head. His manner was absolutely controlled, though he had the look of a man who had reached the limit of endurance. He had borne so much that there was nothing else to dread, and, secure in having suffered the worst, he had a kind of bleak immunity. But the feel-

ing in the younger man's look was so apparent, his sympathy so genuine, that the Ex-Governor held out his hand. Ashmead caught it and wrung it, tears in his eyes.

"I wish there was something I could do, sir!"

Nicholson smiled grimly.

"I know it," he said quietly, and went to his desk, beginning to turn over the documents there with a firm hand.

He read a few letters and signed them, aware of Ashmead's embarrassed presence, his anxious eye. As he finished, one of the servants brought in a card. He glanced at it with impatience, and then his face changed sharply.

"Let her come in," he said, and added, turning to his secretary: "Leave us a while, Ashmead. It's old Mrs. Warren, and I can't very well refuse to see her, though Heaven knows why she troubles me to-night!"

He rose wearily, as he spoke, and went to the door to meet his visitor. She came in, pale and shaken. She, too, had read the newspapers, and, terrible as was her anxiety for her granddaughter, she felt that this pale, stern-looking man was in deeper distress even than hers. Like Ashmead, she was full of sympathy, but at the sight of Nicholson's face the words died on her lips.

"I came to see you—" She stopped, and then hurried on, palpitating. "I had to see you! Laura has disappeared, and Hester—Hester promised me to find her if she could. There's nothing in the papers about Laura—and I'm sure that Laura can't be—out there! I came to you"—she wrung her hands involuntarily—"because I thought you'd know if there was anything—anything that isn't in the papers."

He winced as if she had touched a raw spot.

"My dear Mrs. Warren, I know nothing about your granddaughter."

She looked at him blankly, her shaking hands gripping the top of her cane again.

"Oh, William, what can I do? The child's gone, and Hester—Hester never

thought of her, if it's true! Is it true—what's in the paper?"

He looked at her gravely.

"You mean that my wife has left me?"

"Oh, I don't think it says that!" Mrs. Warren protested.

"It means that."

"Oh, William!"

"It's true," he said quietly. "It's natural, too, I suppose. I was too old for her; I did wrong to marry her. I feel"—he began to walk the floor—"I feel as if I had wronged her, had driven her into this. Leonard was young, handsome, her early companion, and I threw them together and neglected her. I was too old." He smiled sadly, looking down at the old lady. "I'm done for; Curwood is trying to get me indicted for complicity after the fact—and I've wrecked her life!"

"William!" Mrs. Warren forgot Laura for a moment. She rose and went to him with shaking hands. "You mustn't blame yourself! It's her fault. She's doing wrong, she's to blame now!"

"No!" He was stern. "Not now, nor ever. I had no business to thrust myself into her life. I married her when I knew it was more her father's wish than hers, and then I brought her home—" He drew a deep breath; it was not his habit to speak, but the dam was broken and the torrent of words brought relief. "I saw that Leonard loved her. I thought she didn't care, felt secure in her young confidence, and then a shadow came between us. This was it—this! Good God, if I had known in time!"

He stood for a moment, looking into space, his strong face distorted. The wreck of his life absorbed him to the exclusion of all else. Then he felt the old woman's feeble hand on his arm. He looked down at her kindly and took her hand in his.

"I must go," he said hoarsely, "to bring Leonard's body home; but Ashmead is here, and you can trust him. He'll do all he can for you and Laura."

She was too shaken to say much. She



reached up suddenly and kissed his cheek, tears raining down her own.

"And Hester?" she said.

"I'm going to give her her liberty."

"No, no! Take care of her, William—she needs it. Don't put her away, don't be angry, don't—"

He checked her.

"I'm not angry, but I know how it is. I must not quite ruin her life!"

Mrs. Warren was going with him to the door, leaning heavily on his sustaining arm. She turned again and looked at him, tears making a mist between them.

"William, it's for you to save her," she said. "You won't ruin her life; you'll save the remnant to her. Don't cast her off!"

"Cast her off?" He laughed bitterly, with the first natural outburst of passion and anger. "She has cast me off. She has let all the world see her scorn of me!"

They were at the door now, and the carriage waited for Mrs. Warren. She shook her head, faltered, hesitated a moment, and turned for one last effort, one last word.

"She's young and—he's dead!"

Nicholson gave her a look of poignant misery.

"Would God he had never lived!" he exclaimed.

## XXVI

COMING back in the train alone with Laura Warren, Hester made no effort to think. The horror and the publicity of Leonard's death had left her but one alternative—to get Laura away unscathed. She had telegraphed to Ashmead that Leonard's body was there, and then she had gathered up the horror-stricken girl and left by the first train.

The early hours of the journey had been almost blank. Anger and remorse and grief had cowed Laura into silence. She lay in the corner of the seat with closed eyes, making no sign either of grief or of renewed friendliness, and her companion was glad to be left alone.

Hester remembered, with a shudder,

those wild moments when Laura's grief for Leonard had broken all restraint, and she had made a scene beside his body. Hester had got her away, but afterward she had a dim feeling that the men had mistaken Laura for her, and that they stared at her strangely.

Some one, too, had called her by name, and she wondered if it would all be in the newspapers. The thought filled her with dread, and she tried to shut it out, to occupy her mind by watching the people in the car. There were very few there—only two women and a child and four or five middle-aged men, but she knew that in the next car was Barhyte, and his presence, even on the same train, was terrible to her. He seemed like an avenging fury whose pursuit had precipitated the horror of the end.

She knew that even he had been shocked at the sight of Leonard's dead face—that handsome, reckless face. But that other scene—Laura's wild grief, and the crowded hall of the hotel—what had Barhyte thought? She was too weary even to imagine. Spent with grief and trouble, she lay back in her seat and closed her eyes.

Again the whirl and clamor of the train rested her. She felt a great physical weakness, an inability to battle any longer. She had realized, in those few illuminated moments, that Leonard's death, like his life, had been utterly unworthy; that he had had no steadiness of purpose, no sincerity; that his love was a poor thing, frittered in the dirt and mire of an ill-spent life. Only his personality, the charm of his look and his voice, had won their hearts—even the heart of the poor little *danseuse* who had gone to her death with him.

Hester had seen her, when they brought the poor little limp body in—the girl's white face, the spots of rouge standing out on death-stricken cheeks, and the poor, beringed, clutching hands. Of Alice's telegram to Laura, Hester knew nothing. She only saw the pitiful end, the futility of the spoiled life, the cheap

finery drenched with river ooze. Death and silence and total eclipse, the man and the girl gone! It brought a shudder to Hester's heart.

Clearer even than this was her perception of her own escape from mortal injury. She had passed through the fire unscathed. She saw, at last, that what she had felt had been mere emotion—an impulsive sympathy. She had been spared the deeper wound, for she had never loved Leonard. It was like suddenly seeing her own heart face to face, and it gave her a throb of relief.

But her feeling of loneliness increased; not even Laura's presence at her side afforded her the comfort of companionship. She experienced again that peculiar feeling of desolation. It seemed to her that the chasm between her husband and herself was illimitable, that they could never even touch the old tranquil friendliness. He would treat her with perfect courtesy, with a kind of distant politeness that would freeze her heart and soul, but he would never take her to his heart with confidence and warmth and sheltering kindness. There was a wall between them.

She had long ago concluded that he did not love her, that he had married her because of his friendship with her father, and that her youth and prettiness had merely pleased his fancy. She had never reached his heart. He had shut her out, treated her like a child.

When her conscience reproached her for her own conduct in this wild adventure, she reconciled herself to it by the thought that he had never seemed to care what she did. He had let her go with a singular indifference, he had shown her only the hard side of his nature. She knew that he must have suffered, but he had not asked her sympathy. To her he had been always the Governor, the stern, self-sufficient, able man.

He had not needed her—that was it! It was her feeling that she was not needed that had left her to think so much of Leonard.

She turned her head uneasily, and looked at Laura. The girl's pale profile defied her; Hester could not make out the struggle that must be going on in her companion's soul.

Then she shrank a little at the remembrance that Laura thought she had come to see Leonard. If her name got out, it would look so to the world. She knew that it had looked so to Barhyte. How could she defend herself, explain that which must seem inexplicable?

Now, as she recalled the scene in the inn parlor, she understood Barhyte's looks, his manner, most of all his concerted plans for the taking of the fugitive. He had imagined from the first that she had come there to elope with Leonard. He thought they had planned an escape to Argentina.

Of course, Laura was the one who had come there to see Leonard. Laura—who would have married him and run away at a word—was to blame, and Hester could not in honor betray her. She had tried to shelter the girl, and she must keep her word to Mrs. Warren and take her home.

The clamor of the train, which had seemed to help by shutting out the world, grew less, or else Hester's absorption was penetrated at last by other sounds, for she began to hear the voices of two men in front, talking together. They were arguing, discussing politics, and sometimes almost quarreling.

Hester watched them idly, not hearing all they said. Then, one voice rising above the other, she caught her husband's name coupled with Curwood's. She shrank back instinctively and turned to the window, looking out with unseeing eyes; but the next moment Laura laid her hand suddenly on Hester's wrist.

"They're talking about Leonard!" she whispered breathlessly.

Hester turned and saw the girl's white, intent face, her eyes dilated. They were approaching a station, and, as the train slowed down, the conversation of the two men became more audible; but they were not talking about Leonard now.

"Curwood meant to have him impeached," the older man said. He was loud-voiced and violent, and he punctuated his talk with a fat index-finger. "He just saved himself by resigning. Darn him, he almost hung Barhyte to save that scamp of a brother of his!"

"I reckon he was a scamp," the other man admitted slowly. "He died like one. That poor little dancer got drowned, too, in spite of the other woman. They say she was out there—the Ex-Governor's wife—going to run away with him."

"Sure! It's all in the paper; good enough for Nicholson, too. A man who's Governor, and who'll let a murderer escape before he gives the alarm, planning to save his skin at the expense of the other fellow, deserves all he gets. That's what he did, sir—turned a murderer loose. He took him off at night in his own motor-car and put him on the train. They went out all the way to the junction, and that gave him four hours' start."

"Well," the younger man drawled, "that's what they say, I know; yet I've heard that Nicholson was a mighty square man as Governor. Don't you think, maybe, the papers exaggerate?"

"Exaggerate? No! Don't I tell you he admitted it before the committee? He wouldn't deny taking the fellow off in his motor, and pleaded the constitutional privilege not to testify against himself. Campman told me—Campman was the chair-man. If he'd given the rascal up, and then stood up like a man and asked for mercy, he might have got it. As it was, he kept Barhyte in jail for months, and then he sent that scamp off before he saved the innocent man from the chair. Do you think we want such men for Governors of our States?"

The other man's reply was inaudible, for the train jerked forward and his voice was lost in the noise. Laura's hand tightened on Hester's wrist; she had caught another word or two, and she was trembling.

"They think you're the one—they've mixed us up." Her whisper sank low.

"Hester, I've ruined you! Let me tell them—I must tell them—"

Hester caught Laura's hands in her own and held her.

"Hush! What's the use? It's in the newspapers—they said so. They wouldn't believe you—it's too late."

"Oh, it can't be too late!" the girl cried passionately. "It mustn't be too late! I know my folly now—I know he didn't care, he never cared for me! It can't be too late for me to tell them. Hester, they mustn't think such things!"

"No, they mustn't think them." Hester's pale face had grown singularly calm. "It doesn't matter about me now, but the rest of it—they shall not think that my husband sent Leonard away!"

"Oh, but didn't you know that before? He did it to save you."

Hester's lips quivered.

"I knew nothing, except that he had resigned."

Laura's face changed.

"Then he didn't tell you? Why, Hester, that's why he resigned—because of the way Leonard escaped. He had to resign!"

Hester put her hand up to her throat with a helpless gesture. She felt that she was choking.

"He did it to save me!" she said in a low voice. "He ruined himself to save me! He wouldn't tell them that I took Leonard away."

"How could he tell them such a thing?" Laura looked back at her, as white as Hester was. "How could he do it? And how can I let them think that you—that you were the one who cared so much for Leonard?"

Hester laid her hand on the girl's arm.

"It doesn't matter now—nothing matters now!" she said bitterly.

She was trying not to listen, but above the rush and jar of the express she kept hearing wild, incoherent fragments—fragments that made a whole of illuminating misery and shame for her. Suddenly, out of all the twilight confusion of her mind there came a clear-cut vision. She saw

what she had done—that unwittingly she had ruined her husband!

She rose unsteadily to her feet and made her way down the long car, past the two men, and to the door. The train was swaying heavily, but she got through the vestibule and into the next Pullman. It was almost half filled with passengers, but at the end she saw Barhyte alone. He was eagerly reading a newspaper.

Hester made her way toward him, steadying herself with a touch here and there on the different chair-backs. As she came up, he rose hastily and offered her a vacant seat. "She shook her head.

"I want to ask you—a question," she said, very low; "just one question. Is it true that my husband took all the blame for Leonard's escape that night, and do people think that he let him out?"

Barhyte's face changed, and he hesitated.

"Please answer me!" she exclaimed harshly.

"Yes, it is true."

Hester uttered an inarticulate sound and swayed so that he had to catch her and make her take his place. She looked at him strangely, and her lips moved before she spoke at all.

"I let him out," she said at last, with a great effort. "My—the Governor didn't know about it until long afterward—not until morning."

## XXVII

It was a foggy morning, with a drizzle of rain. The naked trees, weird-armed and spectral, stood out in black against the gray sky, and through the mist the figures of the fishermen loomed gigantic. Nicholson, standing alone upon the platform of the station, saw them coming slowly down the village street, bearing a weight between them. He averted his eyes, but he knew it was the body of Leonard, and he had to stand there to receive it, surrounded by a curious crowd.

Men stared at him eagerly, rudely, almost brutally. He was the deposed Governor, the brother of the murderer.

As they brushed against him, he heard harsh comments and, once or twice, an angry murmur. Even here, in this remote corner of the earth, men had heard the story that he, the Governor of a great State, had almost let another man die for his brother, and that at the eleventh hour, when his nerve had failed and he had to release the innocent, he had yet sent the culprit away to safety before he saved Barhyte.

He saw the story in their rough faces, heard it in their voices, yet he remained calm. Not even this could touch him, for he had a still deeper trouble. Hester had left the village before he got there. He had not even seen her, but he knew that her name was on every lip, coupled with the dead man's. It was the last straw, the crowning misery!

Her wildly impulsive rescue of Leonard had left him but one alternative—to expose her to the world or to ruin himself. He had accepted the latter course, and had suffered for it. He was no longer Governor, and he was standing now in peril of an indictment as an accessory after the fact.

The violence of Barhyte and Curwood, and the malevolence of his other enemies, would stop at nothing; but he felt that he could have borne all these things better than to have Hester's name dragged in the mire. He loved her. Through the apparently stern reserve of his nature this one sweet influence had found its way. He loved her as a long-suffering parent might love a wayward child.

But he had been too late to save her. Her name was blazoned on the front page of every newspaper; the story of her flight to Leonard was told with sickening detail. Her youth, her beauty, and her high place were only so many fillips to the imagination. Leonard's death, and the tragedy of the poor little *danseuse* who had shared his fate, made a story that had no equal as a yellow-journal sensation.

These people had read it, and once or twice Nicholson heard Hester's name. He could not resent it; it would be useless



to try to silence one speaker with a scene that would loose a hundred tongues.

He turned sternly away, and followed his half-brother's body into the car. No one went with him. He felt his isolation, and the very misery of it armed him. He had reached the depth of the abyss; there was nothing more to lose, and he could afford to be tranquil. Let them indict him now—it would not matter!

He felt the lurch and jar of the train as it started, and the rush of it had almost the same effect on his tortured brain as it had had upon Hester. It seemed to remove him from the turmoil of his own fate and carry him safely, tumultuously, through the mist and the rain into another world.

In much the same mood he passed through the scenes that followed. He took his brother's body home to the old cemetery, where—still alone—he saw it lowered into the grave. Then, resisting an impulse to go away, to leave it all behind and seek peace in another hemisphere, he went sternly back to face the politicians who were clamoring for his ruin.

The Assembly was in session, and a special committee had been appointed to examine into the Governor's share in Barhyte's arrest and trial. The friends of the released prisoner were still howling for revenge.

It was late in the afternoon when Nicholson reached his home. His coming was unheralded, and no one had met him. He approached the old house on foot, just as the dusk began to fall. The long driveway turned in under great trees, and at the far end he saw a gleam of light at his own door.

He came reluctantly; a feeling of dread oppressed him. What could he say to Hester? What would she say to him?

He must still stand between her and the world. He had told Mrs. Warren that he meant to divorce her, but the attitude of his mind had utterly changed. Leonard was dead, and he could not expose her to greater scandal—unless she desired it. But how forlorn his position—

to be defending her when she must dread even his presence, for how could she feel toward her husband after this?

He looked up at the dark house with a poignant recollection of the moment when he had brought her there as his bride. His career, permeated with brilliant success, with high purpose and great achievements, had been at its zenith. He was the Governor of a great State, and men spoke of him as a future President. His young and lovely wife seemed to him the one thing needed to crown his triumph. He had been profoundly happy.

Then, with this thought—indeed, as a part of it—came the face of Leonard, his young, gay, accomplished brother, the curly-headed boy whom a dying father had commended to his care. He had been in every sense his brother's keeper, but he had failed—failed at every point. That he was forced to brave the odium of Leonard's escape in order to save his wife, added only a keener touch of sorrow. There was no way out!

At the door Ashmead met him, and something in the young man's face warned Nicholson that the end was not yet. They walked together to the library, and the secretary turned over the mail and various documents. Then, looking up at the haggard face opposite, he exclaimed:

"Sir, you're ill! Let me call a doctor! Sit down, sir, while I ring for food and wine."

Nicholson held up a warning hand.

"You know I hate too much fuss, Ashmead. Yes, I'll sit down, and you may order some food. I'm tired—that's all. Where's Mrs. Nicholson?"

Ashmead hesitated.

"She hasn't come, sir."

Nicholson turned sharply, met the young man's eye, and paled to the lips.

"Where is she?"

"With Mrs. Warren."

"Did she come home at all?"

Ashmead shook his head.

The older man turned silently away, put out his hand, and, grasping a chair, drew it to the table and sat down. The

light from the lamp fell full on his face, disclosing its drawn lines. There was an awkward pause; then he looked up.

"Go and get your dinner, Ashmead. In an hour or so I'll call you."

"And yours, sir?"

"Mine?" Nicholson looked at him absently. "I've dined already. I wish to be alone."

Abashed and unspeakably touched, but helpless, the young clerk went out and closed the door.

Left alone, Nicholson rested his elbows on the table and hid his face in his hands. The litter of accumulated work lay unnoticed. Not even to retrieve himself could he labor now. He could not save his good name from ruin without destroying Hester, and every instinct of his nature rallied to defend her. She had deserted him, but she was a child compared to his maturity. Doubtless she hated him for the part he had played in her life—a husband chosen by her father, and his own brother's judge.

He remembered her horror at the thought of his giving Leonard up. Of course she felt that horror still; deepened and made more awful by the young man's tragic death. The thought of her flight from his home, and of her avoidance of it now, when it might be a shelter, overwhelmed him.

It took an effort of will, inexorable and stern, to bring his mind back to his work, to remember that the world still moved, and that he had a part to play. Duty, habit, a hundred inherited instincts, dragged him back from his despair. He turned to the papers again and began to write. He wrote steadily for an hour, read letters, signed and countersigned.

Nicholson had been so long alone; so undisturbed, that he did not notice any sounds about the house until at last a door opened sharply and he heard a woman's voice. He started and laid down his pen. Had she come?

There was a moment of suspense, and then a tap sounded on his door. He rose and crossed the room. He thought it

must be Hester, because the servant had not announced a visitor, and he flung open the door.

It was Laura. She had on some dark garment that made her thin figure look willowy. She turned all the spoiled prettiness of her face on the Ex-Governor.

"I came to tell you," she began, and then halted, choked by some instinct that rebelled against her complete humiliation.

He turned mechanically and pushed forward an armchair.

"Sit down," he said kindly. "You look ill."

The blankness of his voice broke her down. She took the chair that he had thrust forward and sat there, holding the arms with her quivering fingers.

"I came to tell you the truth," she began again in a low voice. "I don't want you to believe what the papers said about—about Hester. It isn't true! It wasn't she who went out there to meet Leonard. It was I!"

The Ex-Governor started perceptibly, turning a strange face toward her; but he said nothing. Indeed, he seemed incapable of utterance.

"I—I heard of a letter of his to Hester," Laura went on, after a moment. "He told her of his misery out there, and said he meant to kill himself. I loved him. I was quite mad about him. I suppose it shocks you to hear a girl speak like this, but girls might as well say it as feel it, mightn't they? I thought of him alone, forsaken, accused, and going to kill himself, and I loved him. I went out there. I don't know what I thought I'd do, but I have some money, and I thought—I believed he'd marry me for that. I was willing to follow him in rags, if need be. Oh, yes, I'm ashamed, but I don't believe I'd have been ashamed if he had loved me. And when I got there, he was out in that boat with an actress, and you know how he died!"

She stopped with a dry sob. There was an eloquent silence. They heard the fire crackling on the hearth. Then Nicholson raised his head.

"I don't understand how my wife came to be there, then."

"She came after me. She—my grandmother asked her to find me, and she came to save me. She knew what Leonard was—she told me so on the train coming back—and she was afraid for me. She never saw him, never spoke to him; she came for me and brought me home. I ought to be ashamed, but I'm not!" Laura beat her hands together. "I'm not! I've only done what I felt, and what other girls would—if they dared! I don't believe Hester could have stopped me, if he had lived and cared; but I know now that he didn't care. That's the end—but I must set Hester straight. She told me, coming back, that she had never loved him."

Nicholson averted his eyes. Not only did the girl's grief seem too humiliating for him to see, but he had need to hide the conflict of emotions in his own breast.

"I think it was good of you to come," he said lamely. "It was brave of you. I can understand that it was hard to come."

"It was so hard that if I'd stopped to think, I couldn't have come! But there's one thing more. I want to tell you everything. I—"

He held up his hand.

"Ought you to tell me everything?"

"Yes, yes! It won't hurt Hester. On the train we heard two men talking. They told each other how you took the blame of Leonard's escape. Hester didn't know; she hadn't understood how she had really ruined you, and—it broke her down!"

Nicholson's face flushed deeply.

"I'm sorry! I tried to spare her. Where is she, Laura—still with your grandmother? She never came home."

Laura had risen, and she stood now, hesitating. She had meant to beg him to come with her to Hester, but his manner chilled her. He seemed so cold; perhaps Hester felt it too.

"Yes, she's with us," she replied slowly. "She brought me home, and grandmother made her stay. You were away, and—and we thought she might be ill."

Nicholson had risen, too, and he stood with his head bowed in thought. Laura noticed the bend of his shoulders, and his pallor. He looked ten years older.

She went slowly to the door, and he came with her. Neither of them spoke, but at the door she held out her hand.

"I—I'm glad I came!" she said impulsively. "I—"

Something in his face made her stop. A moment later she was shivering in the open air. She covered her face with her hands.

"I—I wonder what I've done!" she gasped. "I wonder if I've made it worse or better!"

She had thought that Nicholson would go back with her to his wife, but he was like a man who had received a stunning blow. She could not understand.

## XXVIII

MRS. WARREN had given Hester the upper room at the west corner of the old house, and the one big window commanded the court-house and the dome of the Capitol. Hester had pushed aside the heavy draperies, and, kneeling there with her arms crossed on the cushioned window-seat, she watched the day break.

The long night had passed without sleep. Worn out and broken, she lay there, her wildly lovely eyes fastened on the dim outline of the dome, which was slowly and softly emerging, like a pallid specter, from the purple darkness. The vision fascinated her, drew her; that shadowy dome seemed to stand for something concrete in the life of her husband, the life from which he had thrust her.

She began to feel, vaguely but surely, the passion of high ideals that possessed him, the life of public renown, of high place and influence, that he had pursued with such devotion, and for which she seemed to have no inspiration. She had been a stumbling-block, a mill-stone about the neck of a man whose very soul must have been given to honorable ambition.

She knew now what she had done. There were no illusions. She knew that

he had returned from Leonard's funeral, and returned in time to face a probable indictment.

She had read the newspapers, and they had left nothing to the imagination. They not only described Leonard's death, and her presence there, but they went back and laid bare the story of the crime, of Barhyte's suffering and young Nicholson's escape. Her husband's supposed share in it was emphasized. While he detained the district attorney and the sheriff, he had kept his motor waiting with the engine running, until his brother could get off in it. It was described as a clever conspiracy to defeat justice, only spoiled by the accident to the naphtha-launch.

There was more of it, and then came a detailed account of the members of the committee appointed to consider action against Nicholson—action that would probably lead to his indictment.

Hester felt like one roused suddenly from a stupor. It seemed impossible that she could have been so blind to the accumulated consequences of her own act that she did not foresee the scandal that would at once link her name with Leonard's. She saw now that her act, in rescuing him, had ruined her husband. The Governor's wife could not defeat the ends of justice, and the very fact of their relationship, which had seemed to make it so horrible for William Nicholson to give his brother up, had, in fact, made it impossible to save him.

She recalled, too, that long, wild ride in the motor-car, and Leonard on his knees at her feet. She could see again the wicked eye of the engine coming toward them, hear the thunder of the express. Then came the picture of the sordid tragedy, and Laura's wild grief. Hester had saved Laura, but she had ruined herself. From every side came the stories of her flight to join Leonard, the scandal of his death, and the scene over his body.

Hester covered her face in the shadow of the window, ashamed to face the day again. Her courage, once so high, was broken, and she knew now that she had

forfeited not only her husband's love, but his esteem.

She saw things in their true proportion, and, seeing them, was overwhelmed with mortification at the part she had played. She realized William Nicholson's situation; she saw that he had grasped success, power, high place, and would have held them but for her. To save her he had taken the blame for her terrible mistake, to shield her he had exposed himself to calumny and dishonor.

How he must despise her! That thought haunted her. She could never face him again, never explain the things that seemed inexplicable. How could she make him understand? How tell him that her one wild thought had been to save him from blood-guiltiness, and that her heart had never been really touched by Leonard? For one moment she had thought that she loved him, but the emotion had been so fleeting, so unreal, that it had not soiled the white page of her mind.

Her husband's face, strong, melancholy, preoccupied, rose before her, and she shivered. Again the feeling of the outcast came to her. She could never go home to him, and he had already shown her, by his avoidance of her, that she had no part with him.

Alone she could not face the scandal that represented her as mourning for Leonard. She could not face it, she did not want to face it; but there was still something that she could do—she could make it plain that she was to blame, that she, and not the Governor, had let Leonard go. It would ruin her utterly, it would be the climax, the last straw, but it would clear her husband.

The idea came to her with the force of a revelation, and purged her mind of the mist that had obscured it. She saw at once the one certain thing that she could do.

She could scarcely wait until the day broke, she was in such feverish haste to carry out her design. If she delayed, if she stopped to deliberate, she might never do it.



The day was really breaking now. Pale and clear and beautiful stood the outline of the world. Hester Nicholson rose slowly from her knees by the window and began to dress, her hands shaking a little.

No one had stirred in the house, and it was a long while before a maid came in with a cup of coffee. Hester sent her away, drank the coffee, and went out without tasting food. She did not want to see even old Mrs. Warren, for she had decided what to do, and she must do it. After that—but her mind refused to consider the future; indeed, there was no future for her. She had wrecked her life and her husband's!

A wave of humiliation, of self-pity, submerged her being. She hurried on, she could not stay in the house to face the others. She must go away somewhere out of reach until she could carry out her purpose.

Driven by restlessness, she threaded the streets, passing by the doors of little shops just opening, where children were going for a loaf of bread and a penny's worth of milk. A baker's wagon drove furiously past; another man was selling fish. The chill morning air made Hester shiver; her teeth chattered, and she bent her head and hurried on.

She was constantly afraid of being seen. She shrank from encounter like a tired child, and it was not until she reached the crowded district of the city, and the turmoil of the market-place engulfed her, that she felt safe.

A long time passed. Worn out and heavy-eyed, she turned back; but she

could not go home, and she would not face the Warrens. It was now nearly ten o'clock, and already she felt faint and tired; but her purpose was unshaken.

She made her way toward the Capitol. The Legislature was in session, and the portico and terrace were fairly crowded. There was that hum of life which pervades a big, naked building, echoing in its marble floors and along its corridors.

Hester wore a plain frock and a veil, but something in her figure and bearing attracted attention, and more than one idle group turned to stare as she passed. She felt their eyes, and once she thought she heard her own name. An impulse of flight seized her, almost of panic, but her determination, unshaken as it was, swept her on.

She made her way down into one of the wings. She had already asked for the committee-room; and here, to gain admittance, she had to give her name. The aghast look of the usher brought the hot blood to her face, but she waited while he carried her card in, and, after a long moment of almost unbearable suspense, came out with a permit for her admittance.

She had felt that they must see her; yet, now that the time had come, she faltered, she could scarcely stand. She put out her hand blindly, caught at the back of a chair, and steadied herself.

The young usher started forward.

"Are you ill, madam? Is there anything I can do? I—"

She shook her head. Then, with a supreme effort at self-control, she stepped steadily into the room.

*(To be concluded in the October number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)*

#### DEDICATION FOR A GARDEN BOOK

WITHIN old gardens, when the day is done,  
I fancy lovers walk, as in the sun  
Of summers since they walked, arm locked in arm;  
I feel their presence stir the quiet charm  
Of brooding shadows. So within my heart  
A garden lies, from all the world apart;  
And in soft twilights, when the day is fair,  
I turn to walk in it—and find you there!

*Anne Coe Mitchell*

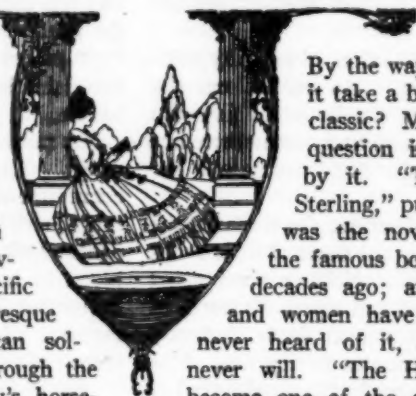
# OLD FAVORITES THAT MAY RETURN

Good Novels of Fifty Years Ago  
That Are Worth Reading To-day

By William S. Bridgman

**R**EADERS of books that are popular to-day very often commend their newness and then speedily grow weary of them. Modern fiction takes a great sweep, extending from Mr. Jack London's human savages in the northeastern Pacific to the late O. Henry's picturesque but ragged Central American soldiery; or it goes dashing through the purple sage with Zane Grey's horsemen, or pours a flood of moonlight over rugged castles and plunging mountain streams in Nonamia and other half-civilized states, which the geographer has omitted from the map for the benefit of the novelist. It seems thus far to have shrunk from attempting to picture the great war that is shattering the very fabric of the world; but that will, no doubt, come later.

Meanwhile, the love-stories still predominate, most of them compounded after much the same formula, in spite of the varied geographical or sociological flavorings with which the authors have sought to spice them; and it is not easy to satisfy oneself with the long series of new novels bearing on their covers the imaginary portraits of their pretty heroines. Even the older and established classics become monotonous sometimes, and the juvenile classics affect one in the same way.



By the way, how long does it take a book to become a classic? Merely to ask this question is to be amused by it. "The Hon. Peter Sterling," published in 1894, was the novel which began the famous book boom of two decades ago; and already men and women have grown up who never heard of it, and very likely never will. "The Hon. Peter" has become one of the classics that are forgotten in twenty-two years.

But how about "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch"? Children have scarcely yet quite matured since that amusing little book was first a "classic," yet already it has nearly passed away. The "later" Henry James is now read only for the notes with which he has made himself still more unintelligible. Everything is moving. Nothing lasts.

## THE "RECALL" IN LITERATURE

If we do not care to read the great writers of one or two centuries ago, and if we are tired of books that have been dubbed "classics" during the past twelve months, just look composedly across the spaces that lie between, and see whether there may not be found some books—indeed, very many books—which should be restored and read again, and perhaps remain upon our shelves. Possibly there

ought to be a "recall" in literature, if not in politics.

Think of the years from 1850 to 1875—the middle Victorian period. Whose books do you suppose were then the most widely read in the English-speaking countries?

At first you may name those of Charles Dickens, and about half the time you will be right; yet some of his novels were disappointments to his publishers and to himself. Then, perhaps, you will mention those of Thackeray; but Thackeray, with all his great prestige, was not by any means what they call in these days a "big seller." He would compare unfavorably, in that respect, with Mr. George Barr McCutcheon.

Both Dickens and Thackeray were hard run by the ingenious Wilkie Collins, who drank much laudanum without suffering any special harm from it. Indeed, the laudanum seems to have stimulated his ingenuity in the matter of plots and weirdly romantic fancies.

Of course, in the United States there were political and military novels, relating to the great issues of the time, and especially to the Civil War; but these were nearly all ephemeral, with the great and wonderful exception of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Most of us in America got our books from England, and so it was practically a question of Thackeray or Dickens or George Eliot or the Trollopes or Charles Reade or Wilkie Collins or Bulwer-Lytton.

To-day, Thackeray and Dickens are firmly set on their respective pedestals. George Eliot has a pedestal that visibly totters, because so many persons are growing frank enough to say that most of George Eliot's novels are tiresome to read—heavy, laborious, and, in the humorous parts, very imitative of Dickens.

Nowadays, indeed, people are exceedingly outspoken about their quondam favorites. Think of Anthony Trollope, Thomas Adolphus Trollope, Mrs. Trollope, the Brontës, Disraeli, Blackmore, Charles and Henry Kingsley, Charles Lever, Bulwer-Lytton, Wilkie Collins, Mrs. Oliphant,

and Mrs. Gaskell. The number of such novelists is almost beyond our reach; and where there were so many there must be some that are not wholly lost.

#### TROLLOPE, THE ENGLISH BALZAC

If, as I have said, George Eliot's novels are tiresome to read, the same is not true of Anthony Trollope, the English Balzac, who has an astonishing range of fertility that will keep him alive for many years. This is no idle opinion, for his books are published again and again through the years in which we live. There is an elaborate edition of them printed in Philadelphia, one very pretty edition in New York, another New York edition, not complete, but beautifully printed on light paper, besides other editions, both here and in England, that are meant for the man who runs as he reads.

All this shows that Anthony Trollope is still alive. Indeed, he has always lived, from the days of "The Warden" down to our own time, when we still delight in his archdeacons, his commercial travelers, his police-court lawyers, his tapsters, and his astonishingly lively pictures of Parliamentary battles.

But if Anthony Trollope still lives, his brother has long been dead. What do we remember of Thomas Adolphus Trollope except a touch or two of Italy? Mrs. Trollope herself is remembered only by her coarse but clever attack upon America. Her novels could hardly be found to-day, even in the most obscure second-hand book-shop. She will never return; nor, I think, will Charles Lever or Mrs. Gaskell, who had their merits, but not enough to keep them living. The same is true of Anne Thackeray Ritchie, who faintly lives because of her great father.

#### COLLINS AND BULWER-LYTTON

There is hope, however, for Wilkie Collins; since to-day the love of plotting and dark schemes might very well bring back one who could plot and scheme so well. "The Woman in White" has passages that thrill you, and so has "The Moonstone." I

have never understood why "Basil" was not more widely read for the strange, dark fancies that make it, to me, the best book that Collins ever wrote.

Then there is Bulwer-Lytton, in his early years a dandy and a rake, but later a serious writer, and not to be neglected. His ghost-story, "The Haunted and the Haunters," is perhaps the finest in the language; and his historical novels are very good. "The Last of the Barons" seemed to me, when I first read it, as strong and full of life as anything of Scott's. It was only a second and a third reading that showed how meretricious he is, with little spontaneity in his books, but a great deal of clever "cramming."

Nevertheless, I think I could read "The Last of the Barons" once more with genuine zest, for the time and the scene are new, and the action vivid. It must be admitted that the best of Bulwer-Lytton's works still has its hold.

Looking over the entire list of novelists who have seemed to pass away, and yet who may have some chance of coming back to popularity again, I believe that Charles Reade is the most likely to have a second life. When he was in his prime, his books were caught up eagerly. Two continents admired the powerful biceps and the roaring laugh of this sturdy Englishman, who was as mercurial as a Celt, and yet had a sledge-hammer stroke like that of a stalwart Saxon warrior.

#### READE'S LITERARY METHODS

Over the man himself we need not linger, for his life was not particularly eventful. Suffice it to remember that he was tremendously conservative in his general opinions, while he was not intensely so in his practise. A bachelor, living with a lady who had been an actress, but whose relations with Reade were those of a cherished sister, he took delight in having won a life-fellowship at Magdalen College, Oxford. During the summer months he would often shut himself up in his pleasant rooms there, overlooking the shady park with its herd of deer, and would fall upon a novel

as a hound falls upon a huge mass of beef. All day long he would write with tremendous intensity. Great heaps of scrap-books, which he had carefully indexed, were piled about him as he worked, and a multitude of little notes, all strung together, helped him out.

He said of one of his novels:

It is a matter-of-fact romance; that is, a fiction built on truths, and these truths have been gathered by long, severe, systematic labor, from a multitude of volumes, pamphlets, journals, reports, blue-books, manuscript narratives, letters, and living people whom I have sought out, examined and cross-examined, to get at the truth on each main topic I have striven to handle.

From this it will be seen that Charles Reade was a forerunner of Rudyard Kipling, who tells you all about the mechanism of a ship while you wait to find out what is going to happen to the passengers. Yet Reade was more than a forerunner of any one who writes to-day, for he overran and outran them all. Undoubtedly he studied and crammed, and "got up" his subjects, but he did not do so with the inaccuracy of a college student or the dullness of one who wants to tell you all he knows, but with the power which sees the whole in all its parts, and lets you in your turn see the parts in their due proportion.

#### THE POPULARITY OF READE'S WORK

This is one of the reasons of Reade's popularity. When a vivid, graphic story is told by one who really knows that every word is true, he becomes, as it were, a great orator, speaking straight to you and telling you truths which cannot be denied, and which give you a sort of thrill as they come hammering down upon you, each one palpitating with life and with the greatness of actuality.

This, then, explains why Reade's novels, which appeared in parts, were read so eagerly in Great Britain and the United States. Each part was artfully adapted to make you almost frantic for the next one; and the story itself was one which makes a reader of to-day, after the tale has



gripped him, lay aside everything and refuse to be moved for a moment until he has gone through the long, three-volume book.

This is the way it affected people in Reade's own time. When a story reached the most exciting part, and a month still intervened before the climax, Reade was showered with telegrams and beset by thousands who wanted a hint as to how the knot was to be untied. Reade's books had nothing old-fashioned or grotesque about them, except, perhaps, his stage Yankee in "Hard Cash" and "Foul Play," who is utterly absurd—even more absurd than the Americans in Conan Doyle.

Thus, in one of his later and inferior books, "A Terrible Temptation," the story turns on the question whether a beautiful and upright wife has surrendered herself to a young clergyman in order that she may have a child, whose presence will save her husband's life. The husband is in feeble health, of the blond type, like his wife, and they are a childless couple. Presently the lady gives birth to a son, whose dark complexion is exactly like the clergyman's—a fact which naturally arouses the most sinister suspicions.

#### AN EXPLANATION REQUESTED

The student body at Yale got into a controversy on the subject, some claiming that *Lady Bassett* had yielded to the terrible temptation, and thus secured her end. Now, *Lady Bassett* had not yielded, but a suppositious gipsy child had been introduced into her nursery and pawned off upon every one as her own baby. This solution had already been indicated clearly enough for most readers; but the Yale students, or a good many of them, had apparently failed to understand the author's meaning.

They fought and wrangled, until at last the bright thought came to them to cable to Mr. Reade. A cablegram was duly composed, and after being approved by the two factions, it was despatched across the water. It requested the novelist to explain this particular point. It is said that he

was greatly amused upon receiving it; but he simply cabled back:

Have told all I know. See book.

This is a fair illustration of the reality with which Charles Reade imbued everything he wrote, even when, as in the book just mentioned, he had become indolent in his literary habits. Like Thackeray in his last years, he had ceased to interview possible characters for his novels, to gather documentary evidence and sift it, in accordance with his former careful habits.

Let us put aside Reade's lesser stories, and see whether the great ones are likely to return again. I fully believe that they are, and should arrange them in what long reading of them all has led me to consider the order of their real merit:

"Griffith Gaunt" (1865).

"The Cloister and the Hearth" (1861).

"Hard Cash" (1863).

The chronological order of these great novels is of no particular consequence, but it is, perhaps, worth remembering.

"IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND"

Reade's first success was with the dainty play called "Masks and Faces," which, in its author's lifetime, became a classic. His earliest work of fiction appeared in 1856, with the awkward title of "It Is Never Too Late to Mend." One sees in it the fecundity of Reade's genius, for in this book there are in reality two novels that have but the slightest connection with each other, and yet both are magnificently executed.

In his first novel Reade struck at the abuses of the prison system in England, and he struck with the force of a steel hammer. Here he had a great advantage, for he not only delighted, horrified, and angered his readers by what he represented in the book, but for every fictitious character or incident he was prepared to give an actual name, date, and place, with witnesses, likenesses, drawings, maps, laws, and so forth.

There are few finer things in fiction than the long, dogged battle in the "reformed

prison," where the jailer is a brutal ruffian, without knowing it himself; where the prim doctor fawns upon the jailer; where one of the warders is conscientious in his cruelty, and still another is naturally kind. The way in which Reade draws these men with a few broad strokes is wonderful, and still more so is the prison chaplain's silent struggle to win over the others to his side. From a mere coolness between the chaplain and the warden there develops an actual feud—*Mr. Eden*, the chaplain, proceeding always by statute law, and *Mr. Hawes*, the warden, either evading the law or violating it.

A group of magistrates, who are beautifully differentiated, side with the warden, and *Mr. Eden* then appeals to the government. The final strife is accompanied by many incidents which move one's sympathies, both to horror and to woe, and thrill like a battle—which the conflict really is.

There are no women of any consequence in "It is Never Too Late to Mend," which was originally planned as a drama of the Australian gold-fields, entitled "Gold." This now forms the second portion of the story, and is woven together without much natural connection. The scenes in the gold-fields were marvelously studied from the stories of miners, travelers' narratives, paintings, sketches, and government reports, so that they are accurate and complete. But where another writer—like Bulwer-Lytton, for example—would at once reveal the fact that all this material was painfully gathered, in Reade it glows with life and action, so spontaneously does the author weld his framework together and create out of its million parts a world that is accurately drawn to scale.

#### A GREAT HISTORICAL NOVEL

The same thing is true in "The Cloister and the Hearth," which is a perfectly convincing picture of central Europe and Italy at the time of the early Renaissance. This book has often been compared with George Eliot's "Romola," but the comparison is utterly unjust to Reade.

In "Romola" the facts are all set down, but they have no life, and the work is convincing only as an introspective psychological study; while Reade grips you by the hand and takes you with him into the truth of life itself, through the Netherlands, into Burgundy and France and Germany and Italy. His striking contrasts of custom and country, the real men and women—clod, knight, bandit, and murderer—the clever side remarks with which he makes the reader laugh, the glimpses of rich humor that glow steadily through page after page, and the gift of tears over which he has complete command—thus has Charles Reade written his truly fine historical novel.

#### A TALE OF TWO WOMEN

It is "Griffith Gaunt," however, that I have placed at the very head of these great books. It is the greatest, in my opinion, because in it Charles Reade has held his hand and written with no less power, but with less frivolity than in his other stories. "Griffith Gaunt" is called on the title-page, "A Study in Jealousy," and it is one of the most perfect studies of jealousy that we can find in literature, not surpassed by the character of *Othello* in Shakespeare's famous play, or by the unhappy hero of Anthony Trollope's terrible and most depressing book, "He Knew He Was Right."

In a large way, Reade's book is something even more than it pretends. It is a study of two complex characters—a man and a woman, who occupy the foreground, and who make you wonder whether, if the woman had been less proud, the man would have been more faithful. In the background is the other man who might, perhaps, have married the same woman, and yet almost instinctively she had chosen *Griffith* for her own.

This book contains some very remarkable episodes, none of them more graphic than the court scene, in which *Mrs. Gaunt*, a high-born lady, left alone and accused of murder, must carry on her own defense, according to the older law of England. Facing her in the witness-box, with eyes

that gleam like an angry cat's, is another woman, who means to swear her rival's life away. It is a striking picture—the accused woman standing there in her innocence, but with her fine intellect sharpened, so that she may meet every attack and destroy her enemy; and, on the other side, the snaky, remorseless, false-hearted creature who has come to take away life by perjury.

#### "HARD CASH" AN ABSORBING STORY

"Hard Cash" is perhaps the most instantaneously absorbing novel of the three. It plays upon the reader's emotions in a dozen different ways and with a high degree of art.

Putting aside numerous details, all of which are either clever or brilliant or amusing, the leading theme is the experience of a young Oxford man, who is kidnaped just before his wedding, and is thrust into a private insane asylum on the sole warrant of his feeble-minded uncle, a tool in the hands of *Alfred Hardie's* father. Not another soul knows of his incarceration, and Reade brings out every one of the frightful outrages which were possibilities at that time under the English statutes concerning the insane.

Of course, the skill of Reade and the horror of the subject are combined in such a way as to make you quiver with excitement. The brutal treatment of many of the insane, their drugging with morphin to keep them quiet, the vermin which infest the place, the blisters, the calomel, the want of cleanliness and decency, are all brought before us in a series of vivid passages. To make his fairness artfully apparent, Reade shows us one asylum conducted in the most considerate way by a kind physician, who, however, turns out afterward to be himself an utter monomaniac.

#### THE TERRORS OF A MADHOUSE

By his athletic build and his fine breeding, young *Hardie* attracts the matron of the house, *Edith Archbold*, who is a thorough sensualist, absolute mistress of the

asylum, and as dangerous in her love as in her hate. She is beautiful, and has all a woman's wiles; but when she finds that *Alfred* is true to the bride from whom he has been taken, then she turns upon him like a tiger-cat, and threatens him with a threat that is far more awful than a threat against his life, for it is a threat against his reason:

"You couldn't love me like a man; so you shall love me like a dog!"

"How will you manage that, pray?" he inquired with a sneer.

"I'll drive you mad!"

She hissed this fiendish threat out between her white teeth.

"Aye," she said "hitherto your reason has only encountered men; you shall see now what an insulted woman can do. A lunatic you shall be ere long, and then I'll make you love me, dote on me, follow me about for a smile; and then I'll leave off hating you and love you once more, but not the way I did five minutes ago!"

At this furious threat *Alfred* ground his teeth and said:

"Then I give you my honor that the moment I see my reason the least shaken I'll kill you, and so save myself from the degradation of being your lover on any terms!"

"Threaten your own sex with that," said the *Archbold* contemptuously. "You may kill me whenever you like, and the sooner the better. Only, if you don't do it very quickly, you shall be my property, my brain-sick, love-sick slave!"

She contrives that he shall be taken to the "noisy ward."

*Hardie* was conducted by *Hayes* and *Rooke* through passage after passage, and door after door, to a wing of the building connected with the main part only by a covered way. As they neared it strange noises became audible. Faint at first, they got louder and louder. Singing, roaring, howling like wolves. *Alfred's* flesh began to creep. He stopped at the covered way; he would have fought to his last gasp sooner than go further; but he was handcuffed. He appealed to the keepers, but he had used them both too roughly; they snarled and forced him on and shut him into a common flagged cell, with a filthy truckle-bed in it, and all the vessels of gutta-percha.

Here he was surrounded by the desperate order of maniacs he at present scarcely knew but by report. Throughout that awful night he could never close his eyes for the horrible, unearthly sounds that assailed him. Singing, swearing, howling like wild beasts!

His right-hand neighbor reasoned high of faith and works, ending each pious argument with a sudden rhapsody of oaths, and never slept a wink. His left-hand neighbor alternately sang and shouted "Cain was a murderer, Cain was a murderer!" and howled like a wolf, making night hideous.

His opposite neighbor had an audience, and every now and then delivered in a high nasal key, "Let us curse and pray;" varying it sometimes thus: "Brethren, let us work double tides." And then he would deliver a long, fervent prayer, and follow it up immediately with a torrent of blasphemies so terrific that, coming in such a contrast, they made *Alfred's* body wet with perspiration to hear a poor creature so defy his Creator. No rest, no peace!

When it was still, the place was like the grave; and ever and anon, loud, sharp, tremendous, burst a thunderclap of curses, and set those poor demented creatures all yelling again for half an hour, making the tombs ring. And at clocklike intervals a harmless but dirty idiot, who was allowed to roam the ward, came and chanted through the keyhole:

"Everything is nothing, and nothing is everything."

No one whose eyes and senses were brought by Reade close to this fearful scene ever dared to speak a word thereafter in favor of the hideous secret asylum where such things may possibly happen.

#### A STRIKING DESCRIPTION

In another strain, take this passage—just a few lines—from the same novel, where the East Indian merchant vessel encounters the Malayan pirate ship:

Now carmine streaks tinted the eastern sky at the water's edge; and the water blushed; now the streaks turned orange, and the waves below them sparkled. Thence, splashes of living gold flew and settled on the ship's white sails, the deck, and the faces; and with no more prologue, being so near the line, up came ma-

jestically a huge, fiery, golden sun, and set the sea flaming liquid topaz.

Instantly the lookout at the foretopgallant-mast-head hailed the deck below:

"Strange sail! Right ahead!"

Ah! The stranger's deck swarms black with men. His sham ports fell as if by magic; his guns grinned through the gaps like black teeth; his huge foresail rose and filled, and out he came in chase.

The breeze was a kiss from heaven, the sky a vaulted sapphire, the sea a millions dimples of liquid, lucid gold.

If personality gives zest to literary work, then surely one should go back to Charles Reade. After Dickens and Thackeray, he most abounds in it. He makes you feel it at every turn. He breaks away from the conventional methods of the story-teller, and sometimes appears to leap over the ground before you.

The languors of Bulwer-Lytton, the artificialities of Wilkie Collins, the sluggish invention of Harrison Ainsworth—these will never come back to us, except in isolated stories. But Reade can be not only strong, but impressive, and even majestic, at moments when his voice seems to swell and thunder, and his words to glow as with hot coals until your excitement equals his.

Therefore, looking carefully over the novelists of one and two generations ago, I can name none so likely to regain his popularity as Charles Reade. In the interest of good reading, and of literature that has strength and body, those who want, as they say, "a ripping good story" should know that they can find one, modern in tone, and still more modern in power, among Reade's four or five best novels.

#### MID OCEAN—AFTER A STORM

WHITE clouds that muse, drowsed in the morning light—  
Ethereal fragments from the wind-swept night;  
In the boat's wake each billow's ebbing crest  
Shot through with colors like the rainbow's breast.

No fringe of land to blot the boundless view;  
A world of water, domed with tranquil blue;  
And mystery wedded to melodious art,  
In the soft beating of the ocean's heart.

William H. Hayne





# Juanita

by  
Carolyn Whiting

"I TAKE off my hat to Juanita! She was the only woman that ever got my goat. She married me."

The man dropped his brush into the red lacquer at his side.

"I had to give up everything—even making fiddles—when Juanita became my bride. The business of my life was simply loving her."

With patient, unerring touch he traced the quaint Egyptian design on the fiddle. I counted seven others, in a more finished state, piled on the couch.

"You seem to be making up for lost time," I observed.

"I *had* to take up something to keep from going crazy when Juanita left."

Gloomily the colors on the fiddle took form with a pattern suggestive of the cross-purposes of human actions and the immutability of fate.

"She loved me for one love-enthralled year," he mused. "Then she transferred her affections to another fellow."

"But what grounds did she have for divorce?" I asked.

"She made me give her grounds for divorce just as soon as she took the notion that she wanted one. She was a strong-minded young woman, I tell you!"

"I suppose she was beautiful?" I queried.

"Oh, I don't know about that. She wasn't the type of woman I would have picked out to fall in love with."

"Wasn't she dark, and Spanish, and alluring?"

"Spanish," he answered, "but not dark. She had gray eyes. And her hair, well—first she blondined it yellow, then she experimented with brown, and finally she decided to dye it black. I take off my hat to Juanita!"

"I wish you would tell me how it all began," I coaxed.

"It began when I was a prosperous illustrator and she was posing for me. She was a mighty poor model, but I never scolded. I only kissed her when she didn't sit still. The first of my troubles was a bad spell of bronchitis. They thought I had consumption. She got the idea that I needed dope, and hung around the studio to see that I took it. The next I knew, she decided that she would have to marry me to save her reputation. She had other lovers—or so she said; but I only saw one. He used to come to my studio to meet her, which I thought rather nervy. He was a married man, too, and I'm afraid his intentions were not honorable."

"And yours?"

"Oh, my intentions were simply to get away from her, if I could. I should have found her another fellow and said, 'My darling, you'll ruin my life if you marry that man!' Then she would have gone straight over to him."

"And in consequence of your lack of forethought," I remarked, "you spent an unprofitable year loving?"

"Exactly. Observe my poverty-stricken condition! I had to give up my studio and move to this garret."

"Do you mean to say you really *couldn't* think of anything but her?"

"I never got the chance," he protested. "If I put on my hat and coat and started out, she would be at the door before I got to the steps. 'Mousie, where are you going?' she would want to know. It was always, 'Mousie, why do you do this?' and 'Mousie, why do you do that?'—till I stopped doing anything at all. The only way I ever had ten minutes to myself was to get up early in the morning. To save her little life she couldn't get up before eleven o'clock."

"It seems to me," I answered, "that you are rather unappreciative of whole-hearted devotion."

"Wouldn't you want to be parted sometimes even from the one you loved best? Not ever? Then you're another man-eater!"

He opened the old coal-stove and stirred the coals with a poker.

"I think," he remarked, arriving at a satisfactory conclusion, "that what she wanted was a spanking. Most women need to be beaten."

"What makes you think so?" I asked.

"They come up here and tell me so. I think a spanking would have been about her range."

"Perhaps," I suggested, "she only wanted you to go on your knees and kiss her hands."

He glared at me over the fiddle.

"I have never gone on my knees to any woman," he asserted, "and never shall!"

The ringing of a telephone interrupted, and he disappeared behind the patched screen.

I began to examine in detail the jumble of drawings, paintings, and half-finished sculpture that littered the walls, table, and mantelpiece—each object the outburst of a wild imagination. And the central attraction, the fiddles!

"Couldn't have been created anywhere else," I thought. "The most Bohemian artist in Washington Square!"

A yellow cat, which had survived the tragedy with unshaken nerves, perched on

my knees and looked through the open door of the stove, purring contentedly.

## II

THE return of the artist roused me. I had not listened to what he said at the telephone. Glancing at the battered clock on the mantel, I saw that it was time for luncheon, and concluded that the call was a reminder of an appointment.

"Does he want you to meet him right away?" I asked.

"Him!" ejaculated the artist. "Do you think I'd talk that long with a *man*?"

"Really," I answered, "I don't know you well enough to say."

"But do I *look* like it?" he insisted in grievous tones.

"No, indeed," I replied. "You look like a man who needs a wife to talk to him from morning to night."

He cast me a disdainful glance. Then, changing the subject, he said cheerily:

"I was talking to a pretty little Jewess. She lives with her grandparents, who don't want her to have anything to do with Gentiles," he explained, in answer to my look of inquiry. "She will escape from her vigilant guardians at six this afternoon and dine at a certain restaurant, where I will meet her and introduce her to a Hebrew of unmistakable features and accent. He, in turn, will get in with the old people, and will begin to take her out. It is prearranged that they will come to a number of parties and entertainments got up by a club of artists and actors."

"You are very accommodating," I remarked.

"Yes, yes! I do all kinds of things to please the ladies. You know, since my divorce, I have the reputation of being a bad man. Young things without experience find a sort of satisfaction in talking to me. I add further interest by trying to kiss them, and sometimes succeed. Then they go away frightened, and don't seek any more adventure for a long time."

"Young girls seem to be your specialty."

"By no means! Old maid aunts find me

a sympathetic listener when Jane goes to a quiet corner with Johnny. Sometimes I entertain the whole company by singing. You don't believe I can sing? Listen!"

He took up the only fiddle that boasted strings, and, picking the accompaniment, began:

"If you would love as I desire,  
I could wealth and fame acquire,  
And, with happiness replete,  
Lay my trophies at your feet.

"If you would love as I desire,  
You would stop before we tire,  
Making love a bliss that we  
Contemplated eagerly.

"If you would love as I desire,  
You would wisely fan the fire,  
Leaving me to dream of you,  
And for your favors humbly sue."

"How could Juanita leave a voice like that?" I asked, as he finished.

"She never heard it," he groaned. "She never even gave me a chance to sing for her." He leaned forward and looked into the dying coals as he said solemnly: "I'm taking up singing, along with fiddle-making, to keep from going crazy—since Juanita left."

The yellow cat, oblivious to sorrow, pressed a soft paw against my hand. During the silence that followed I rose.

"I wish that you would give me some work," I said. "Then I could have the pleasure of seeing more of you."

"Yes; wouldn't it be nice? Think of that horrid author creating a heroine so totally unlike yourself—short and red-haired!"

"Think of you selecting such a book to illustrate!" I answered reproachfully.

"Oh, I never select," he hastened to reply. "I just have to take what comes to me. If you would care to put on that

Grecian drapery and give me a dancing pose, I might work for a while on this composition."

"It's too cold," I objected.

"I can heat up the stove till it's red-hot," he urged.

"Never, never!" I declared. "I should hear the wind rattling around the cornice, and that would make me shiver. I've been cold most of the time since I started posing. I always expect a studio to be insufficiently heated, and I suffer whether it is or not."

"You ought not to let an idea get hold of you like that. Now suppose you took a notion that you were in love, or some such dreadful thing?"

"Then I should no longer be cold," I answered.

"That's true," he agreed with emphasis as he sank back in his chair.

A rap at the door brought him to his feet again. Standing on a chair, he looked over the transom, as seemed customary before letting a visitor in.

Suddenly I saw his long fingers run through his long hair, setting it in a frenzy of revolt. Down he stepped cautiously. Over at the mirror he upturned a box of paint-brushes and personal apparel, pulling out a collar and cravat.

These were hardly adjusted when a second rap was heard at the door. With renewed energy the artist struggled heroically with his hair.

The door-knob turned. The door opened softly, and a young woman appeared.

I passed out unobtrusively, but turned with my hand on the stair-rail to look back. The two silhouettes were blended into one, and I heard, between smothering kisses:

"Yes, forever and ever, Mousie!"

## OUT OF THE DARK

Out of the dark love called me into life;

A mother's soft breast felt the child's first breath;

Her soul's mate found a woman, called her wife.

Life brought me breath and love—shall I fear death?

*Elizabeth West Parker*



# The Wolverine

A Story of the Land  
of Green Timber  
by Raymond  
S. Spears

Complete in This Issue

**F**RENCH LOUIE abandoned his old trap-line on Pigeon River and sailed east along Lake Superior, intending to strike north into new country, if he could find any. When he reached Black Bay he was tempted to stop there, at the peninsula. The islands south of Nipigon also attracted him; but he passed them all by, because he was afraid of the dreadful period when the water is filled with ice in cakes, and a trapper would have to venture across the straits in an open boat, wet and with the ice hanging from his ears and fingers and frozen in solid armor upon his clothes.

No coward was French Louie, but he hated and feared the water when it ran in waves before a westerly gale and froze where it struck. He preferred the green timber, hanging with snow, and the deep woods, where a man walks on web snowshoes and lives in a bark teepee or little log cabin.

So he kept on sailing in his twenty-four-foot half-cabin sailboat, stopping in at Little St. Ignace to talk to the fishermen, stopping at Rossport to talk to the storekeepers and trappers, stopping at Black River to talk with the Indians, for

French Louie was fluent in three languages.

There was no hurry. He had taken up his traps and brought down his outfit on the March crusts, and had been safe in his main camp on Pigeon River during the April thaws. He had loaded his sailboat in early June, and now, as he told himself, he was a "reg'laire spo't, lak a Yankee."

What mattered it to him if the fishing was good? Only that he needed a pound or two a day to eat. If the wind blew a gale, he would lie in a snug bay. If the lake was glistening calm, he laughed and let the sun shine upon his face as he sprawled on the cabin deck. Long since mosquitoes, punkies, and black flies had learned not to blunt their delicate boring-tools on his tough skin.

In the cabin of his little sailboat he carried treasure—gold. He had never wasted the profits of his campaigns against the fur-bearers. In one moosehide bag, each coin wrapped in a mouse-skin, were nearly a thousand dollars in gold.

"My wolf-bag!" he grinned. "Ever' dollaire from wolfs—skins an' bounties,



by gar! I like a wolf! By gar, I like heem bes' of all in a bag—three dollaire for hees skin an' five dollaire for hees bounty, eef dat what dey pay me!"

French Louie was an old man. In his young days he had been very gallant. He had loved often, and had married two or three times or more; and now he saw the fitness of things—that old men should not be gallivanting around.

Long ago he had married a young French girl, and had loved her truly till she died. Then he had married a Yankee girl, not so young, but sensible. When she died, he had wooed and won a cross old Indian widow, one of the kind that never grows fat, and he had lived with her during years of excitement and turmoil. Finally she—what did she do? French Louie would have to stop and think. When a man has loved deeply and often—oh, well!

But now those days were gone, and French Louie had no mistaken ideas on the subject. It was time for him to flock by himself back in the green timber, and live close to all those beautiful things which he found were a sort of substitute—for an old man—for affairs of the heart.

He would tell himself that in fact the green timber was an affair of the heart. What? Couldn't a man love the white canoe-birch? Couldn't he enjoy the herds of moose as if they were his own cattle? Couldn't he have ten thousand grouse, big spruce fellows and little ruffed fellows, for his chickens? And could canary-bird sing prettier than chickadee, or parrot talk better than raven or fish-crow or owl?

Recluse? Hermit? Soured on the world? Not a bit of it! No one lived on better terms with people than old French Louie. He would talk to the girls with all the gallantry of past days. And how those old fellows can talk! How well they know what to say to the young and rosy-cheeked! But French Louie had no serious intentions—none whatever.

"I am old," he would say; "so old that I am no good to eat! I am all

dried up, an' need no smoke to cure me! By gar, I bet my hide is two inches thick on my back! Look at this!"

He would show the deep crease across his forehead, where the head-strap of his pack-line had cut a wide, deep furrow, and perhaps had misshaped his skull a bit. He was very proud of the old marks and scars and furrows made by the recurring toil of his trapping life.

Not that he had always been a mere trapper. In the old days, when he had had a wife, he had trapped in the winters and fished in the summers.

"By gar, a woman keep a man work-in"! A man learn to enj'y work, if he haf a woman to keep it hot to home, by gar!"

French Louie had laughed his way through sixty years of life. Ever mad? Oh, yes—for two minutes! By that time he had won peace with any man.

With women he never was angry—for of what use would that be? You cannot cut a woman's throat, nor hit her on the head with a club, nor even strike her with a small, sharp-knuckled fist. Such procedure would be exceedingly impolite. Instead of being angry with a woman, the best way would be to go over the trap-line, or out to the points, to haul the gill-nets.

So French Louie idled along the North Shore, talking gallantly to white, breed, and Indian women. One could almost tell that he was coming by the laughter that sounded upon his arrival in town or fish-camp. The men could bear him no ill-will, because they knew that French Louie knew he was old, and because he helped to keep the women good-natured to their own men.

In that sparsely settled land it behooved the women to be good-natured, for sometimes a man would just melt away into the green timber and never return. It is unpleasant to have one's man disappear!

June, July, and half of August went by, and French Louie had arrived at Port Coldwell. He knew all the gossip of the

North Shore by this time. He had met all the local trappers and all the local fishermen.

He had told two boys, who were just starting to fish for themselves, things about lake-trout and other food fish which even many old, old fishermen did not know. Those two boys were bringing in as many fish as old-timers, to the delight of French Louie, who liked to see youth prosper, because a young man with money knows how to spend it and get the good out of it. At the same time, they had bought a good motor-boat, and were saving while they spent. French Louie would pound his knees with joy when he saw one of them taking a walk with some North Shore girl in the gathering twilight.

"By gar!" he would grin. "I tell 'em to feesh, an' they feesh—but I don' have to tell 'em a new way to spark the gals! They don' need no teachin' about gals, young feller don'!"

One day French Louie awakened from his fairy-land of enjoyment, stared at the calendar, and uttered a shout:

"August feeften! Vat? By gar! De fur prime, an' I ain' got a trap set! I ain' got mah line blazed! Hi, hi, hi! I mus' get right to work!"

He jumped four feet into the air and whirled his feet around like a pinwheel. He stormed up to the Port Coldwell store, and poured out a torrent of invective and orders for supplies. He hauled his boat up and painted the top. Then he painted and recalced the bottom, and put in an extra rib or two, in case he should "bomp ker-slam into a rock, by gar!"

On the first day of September he bade adieu tenderly to the seven houses, the store, and the railroad station at Port Coldwell. He waved his hand at one of those foreign girls who could talk no Indian, French, or English, but whose language sounded like a squirrel with a cold—a girl who smiled and would have been willing to leap aboard his little boat and accompany him out of a cruel civilization into a kindly wilderness.

But no! French Louie must attend to

his business now, and he was old. He hoisted his sail to the air that was drawing through the inlet. Outside, his jib and mainsail swelled out to the breeze, and away he went, lifting and jumping and singing to the slap of the waves and the fiddling whine of his taut sheets and growling sail.

"To work! To work!" he shouted. "By gar! A man gets so tired doin' not'in' he mos' die of eet, by gar!"

He turned into Swallow River, Simmons Harbor, Spruce Bay, and ran out to visit Otter Island Light.

"By gar, Cap'n Mac!" he greeted the light-keeper. "I be'n lonesome, an' like I nevaire see a feller agin!"

"Glad to see you, Louie! Any mail for me?"

"By gar, on the boat—lettaires an' papers an' magazines! I forget to bring 'em op. Come aboard! By gar—sh-h!"

On board the boat he brought out a bottle of wine, swore his friend to secrecy, and then they smacked their lips over it.

Another week went by, and French Louie started up in amazement. He screamed and cackled like a cat whose tail has been stepped on. Time had played a scurvy trick on him. Time had swindled him. He had been asleep. He had been chloroformed. There was no such thing as that lost week! It could not possibly be!

That very afternoon French Louie steered out of Big Dave's Harbor across Otter Harbor into Otter Bay. He drove his sailboat right up the middle of Otter Bay and headed full tilt upon the white sand-bar at the other end, not striking his sail till the keel grated. Then down he let the sail clatter, and the bow of his boat slid clear up out of the water.

"By gar!" Louie laughed. "I bet I near run agroun' dat time!"

If he had loafed all summer long, now he set to work with tremendous energy. He ran up the bay shore and anchored in the cove at the end. There he put a few supplies into his pack, and headed back into the woods.

He carried his trapping-ax, and bounded through the woods, looking at the brooks, at the bars of sand and mud along the rivers and around the shores of the ponds. He studied the tops of the ridges and the hills of unusual height. At intervals, as at the forks of a stream, the foot of a lake, in a pass through some conspicuous ridge, he slashed a blaze on trees along the routes that he followed.

He was looking the country over for fur signs, and to get the lay of the land. He had to pick routes for his trap-lines, and these must conform with the courses run by the wild life.

He found fisher, marten, mink, and other tracks. In the sand he saw where wolves had tramped; along the foot of stone cliffs he found where lynx had passed by. In the gaps through the long ridges he discovered runways which were used in common by all the woods creatures, from moose and bear down to rabbits and mice. Even the grouse flew through these low places in the ridges, and hawks sometimes waited near them, in hope of seeing an easy victim dart over the divide, exposed to attack.

In the lakes were plenty of trout, which he could catch through holes in the ice, to vary his own diet and use for bait. In the swamps were rabbits innumerable. Grouse lived around the little openings which appeared in the woods, either the barren rocks or the grassy beaver meadows.

"Hi, hi!" French Louie cheered himself. "Plenty of fur! Plenty of t'ings to eat, an' I got a fur pocket!"

## II

HAVING spied out the land and roughly laid out his trap-line trails, the trapper returned to Otter Cove. After looking to right and left, he picked a camp-site beside a little spring that poured down over a ledge of rocks. All around were spruce and fir trees six or seven inches in diameter. White birches grew thickly above the ledge.

He set himself against the trees with

single cross-cut saw and ax. He leaped and cut and sawed, cackling and screaming till all the blue jays within a mile came screaming and fluttering to see what new phenomenon had arrived among them.

Scolding the blue jays and being scolded in turn, French Louie put down trees, logged them off, and, having notched them, built them up in a crib twelve feet long, eight feet wide, and five feet high on each side. He peak-roofed the shack with scoops—logs split in two and gouged down the inside, and then laid round down, round up, so that the rain and melting snow would run down the troughs. He filled in the spaces in the roof where air might enter with thick caribou moss. He chinked the walls of his cabin with moss and clay. Happily he found a clay-bank, or what served as clay.

He built his cabin in three days. He put in a split-plank door and two windows, one in front and one on the side to the south. He rigged up a stove pedestal, and put upon it a good cast-iron stove. He ran a pipe through a large sheet of iron in the roof.

"By gar! I don't want my cabin to burn down!"

He dug a root-cellar and a fur-shed, dug out the spring, and put in a trough that led the water into the corner of his cabin, where it ran out under the side through a hollow log spout, carefully banked up so that no wind could come through it. He cut ten cords of wood up on the rock—good birch and maple body wood—stacked it on both sides of his cabin, and covered it with pole sheds, thatched with spruce and balsam boughs.

"By gar! I want my main camp all right!" he declared.

When he had finished his main camp, it was all right. It would stand against any blizzard, because no gale could reach it. It was down out of the cold. It was stored and supplied for the winter campaign, except for "roots"—potatoes, carrots, turnips—and supplies that he would put in later in the fall.

The same day that he finished his cabin he headed back into the woods, "to feex 'em op a bit."

He peeked and peered to right and left, picking up the places he had seen before with unerring memory. He avoided rock ledges, circled back to clear river gorges, and traversed stone gullies, over some of which he made a bridge by felling tall spruces. He wallowed through the deep moss of dark swamps, and surprised himself, as he pretended, by discovering little ponds where moose stood and gazed sedately at the intruder.

"I don' see how I missed gettin' an introduction to yo' fellers!" he said to them. "I was here once before, an' yo' was not at home! Mebby I was over yon side, an' yo' not have the street cleared fo' me to walk!"

All the way out he zigzagged back and forth, except in long stretches where he asked no better lay of land, or where he knew he could not do better. He called the country a thousand names. He declared aloud that in such a rough hole a man could not travel ten miles in a week. He swore that a trap-line could not be blazed through it if a trapper worked a year, and he complained that a wolf would be lost every day of his life; but when the sun told him that it was time to return he blazed the broken trail and filled in the open places, along ridges, across flats, and landed himself in his own back yard at dusk.

It was five miles of trail, which, when he had cut out a few dead trees and slapped off a number of twigs and branches, was as good walking as one could wish, for woods traveling. French Louie pretended to be surprised to find it so good when he went back with a pack-load the following day, and extended it six miles farther into the wild, blazing it as he traveled, picking the route as he strode along.

He stopped in another low swamp, and built himself a wigwam of birch bark. It was a beautiful little cone-shaped camp, laid up on poles. Inside there hung a

curtain over the doorway, and he festooned it with pails, cups, and bark baskets to contain tea, baking-powder, salt, and other necessities, out of the way of pesky squirrels and unprincipled mice.

From this camp he ran a line northward to Twin Falls River, and another southward to Pukaso River. On each of those streams he built a bark wigwam, and supplied it with necessities. Out from each of the river camps he made loop lines around the hills, and cleared the lines of logs and limbs and twigs, so that he could walk freely along them, carrying a heavy pack. He blazed the trees in line, mile after mile, the blaze-marks shining light yellow against the dark bark of the spruces, like street-lights in the gloom of the deep woods.

Day after day French Louie toiled. He worked, as it seemed, harder than even youth and strength could stand; but if a man laughs all-day long, keeps up a running interchange of insults with blue jays and ravens, and bluffs bull moose out of their natural environment—why, he could do almost anything. Not one of Louie's antics was a wasted motion!

Nothing escaped his eyes. He saw and remembered the runways of the wild creatures. Here was a rock ledge, and along the foot of it he picked up a gray hair or two.

"By gar! Loup-cervier—lynx! By gar! I don' forget heem, no, by gar! Twenty—thirty dollaire!"

Along every brook, on every rapid, in every gravel-bar, he picked up the traces of mink, otter, and beaver. He saw the very animals many times. In the gaps of the stone ridges he found paths cut deep by hoofs and paws. He exulted in the evidence that fisher and marten had passed that way.

In the little patch of yellow sand a few hundred feet north of the old log-camp cabins at Pukaso Bay, French Louie found the track of a wolf. Two claws and part of the toes of a forefoot were missing, and served to identify the brute for all time. The track was large, but



not gigantic—just over four inches in length.

French Louie stared at that track for a long time. Something about it stirred his mind. He was trying to place his thoughts upon that something.

He had pinched a wolf's toes in a steel trap more than once; but he knew that he had never seen this track before. He had followed the trails of wolf-packs, and of lone wolves. He knew the she wolf's den and the dog wolf's lair. He knew wolves so very well, indeed, that now he looked at this wolf track without any of his usual antics—without a grin, or a kick, or a gesture. He stood still, without a quiver, his eyes resting upon the print of a pad in a patch of hard, wet, yellow sand, so sterile that nothing grew in it.

It is a fact that the footprints of a man in the snow or dirt tell what kind of a man he is—a lazy man, scuffling along; a nervous man, twisting the ball of his foot; a strong man, pounding the surface; a crafty man, stepping lightly; a careless giant slumping along—each leaves his own mark, and no other could leave the same mark.

French Louie felt in his bones that this two-toed wolf was a better wolf than any other of his tribe. The old man himself could not tell why he thought so, but it was there in the print of the paw in the sand. Of course, the wolf now knew enough to avoid a steel trap! No doubt he also knew the deadly nature of hydrocyanic acid, of strychnin, and of other poisons. The track looked just right for a strong, wise wolf.

"He not so heavy as mos' wolfs of hees size," said French Louie, shaking his head. "A lean, gaunt wolf, heem! He step soft, crafty like. I bet I make hees acquaintance these wintair, by gar! All aroun' heem iss other wolf-track, but see heem walk! He go straight, an' he hol' hees haid low, hees ear op, his eyes bloodshot, purple like fire! By gar, he's one beeg feller in hees haid!"

That wolf-trail, driving straight through all the careless, wandering,

snuffling pack, was as plain as day to French Louie. He saw the other wolves for what they were—young pups, old rompers, a growling, snarling, hungry pack, leaving everything big to the wolf that traveled straight.

"No, by gar! Dat's too bad!" French Louie grumbled. "Dat feller raise one combamba wit' my trap-lines! Dey raise trouble wit' me, too, if dey catch me in the dark of the moon! By gar, I bet I climb a tree like porcupine—no, by gar! I run up like I wass a marten or a squirrel, in one mighty beeg hurry!"

He laughed aloud, thinking what a spectacle he would make, with wolves leaping to seize his trousers, while he was shinning up the tree, ejaculating and shaking his long gray hair and whiskers with Gallic anger and excitement.

"By gar!" he laughed. "I bet dat ole feller make me so mad I don' get my compose back in a week, by gar!"

He fixed up one of the old cabins for a line camp, picking the strongest cabin there, not the most inviting. He set up poles to make bars for the windows, and he looked well at the door, bracing it and making sure that it would be ready to resist a siege.

Besides this tribute to the wolf-pack's menace, he had in mind the wind which would sweep down over the Pukaso flats with all the stinging, bitter breath of midwinter and arctic blizzard, or the dreadful meteorological phenomenon of cold that looks up to zero as warm, that freezes alcohol and splits timber, that heaves the ice up in hummocks and burns the skin like a hot iron.

Thus the days went by, and each day French Louie did some work for his winter campaign. He followed up his lines and put up trap cubbies—beautiful little huts, thatched with evergreens, whose gates would be death for any creatures trying to cross them. He built them against big stumps, against dry boulders, on hummocks, and against the banks of streams.

He would put one trap beside the

blazed line. Another he would set down in a hollow, fifty yards away on a stream-side. Still another he would plant on the other side, against a sheer wall of rock. Some were in the midst of swamps, where every tree looked like every other tree. Some were in the gaps of mountain ridges, landmarks of the broken land. He marked each trap cubby by a diagonal blaze on a tree, so that he would not forget it.

By each trap cubby he hung a trap on a long pole, like a well-sweep, resting in a birch or maple fork. The trap was ready to set; and as if to make his cubbies the more fatal, he tossed into each one a chunk of fish, so that the animal yielding to the first temptation with caution would rush in with delight and expectation to the second taste—and taste death then!

The frosts fell lower and lower, and when ice remained all day in one little pool, French Louie shouted, for now it was time to trap.

### III

In the mind of a puppy wolf there is not much of anything but nonsense and plastic memory. He plays and romps around, careless and enjoying himself. If mother wolves knew no more than their puppies, and if they did not have their dens far from enemies, few wolf-pups would reach the age of the long races on the winter crusts.

A wolf-pup whose mother lived in a split rock den up Dog River was particularly fortunate. In the first place, the four other pups in the litter of which he was one were killed—one was caught by a great owl, one choked to death on a bone, and two just died.

The survivor had all the care lavished on him which ordinarily would have been distributed among five. The she wolf, her heart gnawing with a thousand maternal anxieties, watched and favored this pup while he grew up gangling, awkward, and lank. She was not a gentle mother, but she was a thorough one.

She nipped the youngster's ears to make him chase rabbits; she taught him

neck-holds, heel-holds, and the snap that hamstrings. She put him through a thousand tricks and experiments, from finding gull-eggs on rocks that had to be reached by swimming, to nosing out blind rabbits in their nests under logs. She drove him from lazy, yapping dependence to lurking, cunning self-help.

Out of Michipicoten, east of Dog River, a trapper ran a line, putting down traps with great cunning and spreading out poison with the malice of greed. On the day this wolf's mother swallowed a six-inch trout caught over a hump of frozen foam below a swirl in Dog River, the pup nosed his way along a tempting trail that led in the direction of sweet meat and fresh blood.

Inside the trout was a capsule containing prussic acid, and in the trail was a No. 3 double-spring trap, set for a fox. At about the same hour, by the moonlight, the old wolf started up stiff-legged, with the knowledge that something terrible was happening within her, and the hungry pup stepped upon a leaf that sagged a little under his foot. The next instant his pained yelp resounded through the woods.

Perhaps the last sound the mother wolf heard was that agonized yelp. She had backed up and stumbled sidewise, because of the inner agony, but the cry of her young for help caught her in a place which hurt more than anything physical that could happen to her. She stretched out at full gallop to the rescue, and raced down out of a ridge-top to that fatal trail whose jeopardy she would instantly have recognized.

She saw her pup struggling wildly, and her last thought was to reach him; but the trout had opened by this time, and the capsule had let flow the deadly acid. She stumbled, rolled over and over, struggled a little, and died within a few yards of her offspring, who was left to his own resources, struggling in a trap a bit too small for a wolf of his size.

Jumping, leaping, whining, and suffering real pain, with good grit in him which

would not let him lie down, the pup jerked and snapped, and at last got free—with two toes cut off. He limped to his mother, but she had no comfort for him. He grew thirsty, and went to find a drink. He whimpered and whined, and found that wading in the cold water eased the burn of his paw.

He wandered around the rest of the night, and the following day, when he took his back track to look for his mother, all he could find was a red carcass hanging over a limb. Though he knew the odor, he did not know the carcass. He slunk away from that place, and later, in the first snow, found a track of his own kind.

He discovered three or four wolf-pups as lonely as himself. They liked company, and they hunted together. Others joined them, and they caught rabbits and ate dead fish along the lakes and streams. They caught a sick moose calf, and then an old cow.

After a time they fell into the company of older wolves, and the pup with two toes on one forefoot hunted up near the head of the pack, for his old mother's faith in him, and care of him, had shown him many things to do. Besides, he knew when to throw caution aside and plunge to attack, shaking the throaty growls out of his gnashing jaws.

Other wolves might play and romp and waste their strength, but there was not much romp or play in Two Toes. He had been to school, and there had been no recess in his day! So while other pups rampaged around, nipping and biting one another, he fought. He bit in earnest, snapped with vengeance, and snarled with meaning.

An ugly wolf, sure enough, but a competent one! He knew, too, how to follow the old, hardened wolves and not get in their way. They did not play, either, but at their heels one would run up to fresh meat. Drawn out in a line, single file, chasing down big game, or tearing through the woods scattered out, all abreast, jumping up and snapping rabbits

in two—there are a thousand ways for wolves to hunt!

Two Toes won his place in a pack of old ones, instead of waiting for the pups he had joined to grow up. There were only four or five of these veterans, and Two Toes had to suffer assault and battery and make his fight for the privilege of hunting with them. He took his place in the rear, and followed the pack into deep snow in a burning, where they had cornered a late yearling moose. There he dived past his new mates and showed what he could do, hamstringing the brute and then cutting its throat with three snaps or so.

He did not rush to the front during the race, of course. The older wolves would have cut his hips to the bone; but he waited till the moose was at bay, and till the leaders of the hunt had been trampled and beaten back. Then he dashed in, and, following his attack, the pack had meat. That was the test of the newcomer!

On their side, these old wolves knew many things which one by one were passed on to Two Toes. They had a thousand tricks to play on game they wanted to eat. They ranged the wilderness as free rovers, too, having no bounds to their country.

They moved north to the railroad track, and looked down in the February cold upon the passing trains, whose smoke blotched the night sky, and whose headlights were a wonder of the dark. In the other direction they swung down to the environs of Michipicoten, around the ends of the mine railroad there, and down to the woods clearings a few miles up from the slough.

Wolves of meaner instincts, less free, dreaded to leave the land they knew, and would not migrate except under spur of hunger. There was a pack at Agawa, another up Twin Falls River, another around Swallow River, who were all home-stayers, afraid for their lives if they got beyond a ridge they had not crossed before.

The pack in which Two Toes made his place was composed of a different breed. They were wolves who traveled not entirely for food, which they consumed in prodigious quantities, though they could go without meat for a long and agonizing period. They traveled to see what part of the big woods satisfied them best.

They had fun with the creatures of the timber. It was a kind of fun that did not come from the desire to laugh, perhaps, but an instinctive, brutal kind of humor. When they were not hungry, when they had pretty well digested a paunchful of meat, desire to make another kill did not afflict them. They wanted a change, and they found the change in characteristic fashion. They would hunt cats!

Now the cats of the big woods are particularly worth a wolf's hunting. They are three or four feet long and stand as high as a wolf, and when one of them grows excited it fills the woods with a delightful caterwauling.

The Canadian lynx, sixty pounds of muscular convulsion, is to a wolf about what a Manx cat is to a pair of pugs or terriers. So, lacking another form of excitement, Two Toes and his comrades would hunt around until they found a lynx-track, which they would follow till they routed the big cat out of its lair. They would circle around the lynx, leap in and snap, yelp, bark, growl, and jump stiff-legged.

A blue jay will fly two miles to be present at the pestering of a lynx by a small pack of wolves. The lynx does not at all care for that kind of entertainment, but the wolves and the other woods creatures take an interest in it!

Sometimes, but not very often, a pack of wolves will catch a lynx out in the open and rush upon it, tearing it to pieces with all the joyous acclaim that a pack of dogs and humans raises when it rides in to tear up a fox. As a general rule, however, the lynx escapes. A lynx escaping a pack of wolves is a spectacle! There is a saying in the Canadian woods

that the lynx lost its tail because wolves seized the trailing end away back yonder.

Another form of wolf sport is chasing the savage pekan, or fisher. A fisher is a large weasel, gray-black, and all its muscles go to two purposes—first, to make its teeth efficient, and, second, to make all four sets of its claws good for its needs. A large fisher in good health will take on almost any sort of fight. Sometimes it is so imprudent as to stand and face a pack of wolves.

A lone wolf, after one or two experiences, will not trouble a fisher. A pack of wolves, feeling the need of exercise and excitement, will round up a fisher and plague it. A cornered fisher, in a hole, with its jaws and claws to the front, will defy even a pack; but the wolves will take turns trying to drag the brute into the open, where, while one wolf serves for the pekan to bite and tear at, the others will drive in and cut its back in two, or pull its legs off. This, at least, seems to be the plan of action, as disclosed by the tracks of such episodes in the snow.

#### IV

THE great curve of the east shore of Lake Superior is so savage and desolate that it is the natural range of wolves. It is so lonely a land that there is little fear of meeting the contrivances of trappers. The pack to which Two Toes belonged crossed the Indians' lines running out of Pic River reservation—not very long lines. They ranged as far as the trappers' ventures out of Michipicoten, and out of the settlements north of the Soo.

These cunning wolves laughed at traps and poison. Such things as tallow pills and steel traps, as ordinarily placed, made them jeer.

Nevertheless, it was a trapper who made Two Toes the leader of the pack. That was when Two Toes was four years old, and when his body was more slender than that of any of his companions. His slenderness was due as much to nerves and catlike watchfulness as to the work



he did, though he raced with his blood-thirsty crew and pirated upon the fat of the forest sea.

They had been down to Michipicoten on a foray. They found, in the first snow, the track of a strayed cow. That cow was the greatest temptation they had ever had; and the worst of it was that they didn't recognize the fact that it was a temptation. Following up the trail, they located the beast about four miles out of town, and raced in on it.

The poor bossy, who hardly knew a wolf's howl when she heard it, did not start to run till the trailers were within a hundred yards of her. Her frantic, lumbering gallop was the joke of the pack as they darted in from both sides and behind, cutting at her fat sides and clumsy legs. They had run down a young moose, and eating a cow was like licking up scattered pieces of fat, for all the race she could make.

They were too few to eat much more than half the cow, and they retreated at daybreak, to lie down under cover and digest their gorge. They had eaten so much of the soft beef and melting fat that they were heavy and sleepy.

After noon, when they were as inert as ever such wolves could be, and scattered over an acre or two of ground, each animal having picked a comfortable bed to his own taste, they were suddenly aroused by a near-by sound—a faint throb on the ground, a slight reverberation of the air.

Holding their heads down, but staring with all their eyes, the wolves listened and watched. They soon discovered that a man had come right among them. He had arrived within a few jumps of them all.

Two Toes just faded away through the low brush. A light, agile beast, he need not raise his back ten inches from the ground, nor disturb blueberry-bushes four inches apart. As he crept away, his breastbone plowed through the top of three inches of snow.

The old, heavy, shaggy leader of the

pack, whose strength was always greater than his wit, was caught napping for once. He had selected for his bed the dry needles under some low, compact spruces, upon whose branches the snow had fallen and stuck, arching over the bed underneath. The clump of spruces grew in the thin soil on a little rocky knob, separated from the woods by an open space about thirty feet wide.

The leader of the pack, hearing the sound, stared around cautiously, lying absolutely motionless till he could get his bearings. Then, right at the edge of the timber, appeared a man.

He was only thirty feet away. He had come like a ghost through the woods. He must have taken ten seconds to make each step. But there he was, closer to the big wolf than ever a man had been before by daylight.

The wolf, his nerves shaken, and in a panic, leaped straight out of the clump of spruce and down the snowy, rounded side of the rocky knob. His first leap was a short one, because he had to force his way through the stiff trunks of the dwarf spruces. It was a slow jump, too, as wolf-springs are made. His second leap was a magnificent bound, but as he landed there was a crash in the timber, and night fell upon the wolf like a thunder-clap.

The fleeing wolves, five in number, raced away in terror. They heard a yelp or two, and then caught a low rallying-cry ahead of them. They circled around, and all that afternoon they raced away. Two Toes, who had been running second, was now in the lead.

That night they took stock, so to speak, and then raced away again, this time not stopping till they were in the heart of the desert of stone and green timber that lies between the Old Bay Trail from Michipicoten northward and the shore of Lake Superior on the west.

The terror of that silent, unseen, unfelt approach never left the hearts of that wolf-pack, the far rangers of the green timber. They slunk in the mid wilderness, and in early spring or later, as they

were attending to the burdens of house-keeping and pup-rearing, if they heard on the still night the blast of a steamer's whistle out on the lake, thirty miles distant, they shivered and crouched at the memory of the fatal day when their leader failed to take his place at their head.

Having done their duty, the wolves assembled again in the autumn. Two Toes led them. His pack numbered six, for an ambitious pup or two had forced recognition upon them. Their own pups had scattered far and wide.

The wolves went through that winter without mishap. They approached a trap-line that extended as far south as Oiseau Bay, and they circled down to the environs of Michipicoten, in spite of their terror of the silent and deadly timber-wraith; but they made their approach at night, and at dawn they were far away.

No trapper had ever raided their homeland in the memory of any of the wolves in Two Toes' pack. Their forays had been from a fastness of their own, where only moose, lynx, fisher, and other wild creatures like themselves were to be seen.

Sometimes, in the summer months, humans would appear along the outskirts of the rocks and the green timber. They would drive along the lake, in vile-smelling craft, and they would run up the rivers to catch fish. These fish were never poisoned by such visitors, and many a tasty morsel could be picked up in the vicinity of the places where they stopped beside the streams to build fires and cook meals.

Two Toes and his mates, when they came together late in August, would travel along the lake shore and watch the humans from safe hiding-places. Sometimes one of the strangers would kill a moose, take only a piece of ham and a strip of meat from along the backbone, and leave the rest of the carcass where it fell. No poison was in this meat, nor were any traps placed around it.

The wolves regarded such kills as real saving of energy, and the meat was far and away more juicy than that of any

of the moose whom they could pursue and tear down. In fact, the meat which they could kill for themselves was seldom of the best quality, since something usually had to be the matter with a full-grown moose before they could capture it, if nothing more than hunger on account of sleet or crusty snow. Sometimes, however, if they were lucky, they would find a calf whose mother was not there to protect it; and then the wolves had a real feast, the kind that melts in the mouth!

Two Toes took life seriously all the while. He deplored waste of energy. One thing was always borne in upon him—that one of his paws was not as serviceable as the others. Sometimes, when he was running, the paw with two toes would slip on smooth rock or slide over sand, and he had to use all his strength on three paws when he was climbing over icy cliffs, or crossing a frozen lake back in the wilderness.

Other wolves were better able to twist and turn than he was, unless he exerted himself to the utmost; but because of his weakness he unconsciously applied himself to bringing up the strength and grip of his other paws.

He could do one thing which no other wolf of their acquaintance could do. He could climb a tree, for he had discovered that he could pull himself up with his teeth, or hold with his teeth while he drew his claws up and obtained nail-holds. This he had been compelled to learn to do, because otherwise his crippled paw would not hold when he and his pack went up almost sheer and perpendicular cliffs, grown at the crevices with roots and trees which offered toe-holds to his mates, but teeth-holds to him, in addition to the normal grip with three paws.

It is true that Two Toes climbed awkwardly, like a dog, and not with the free rush of a cat or the reaching clutch of a fisher or marten—but he could climb, nevertheless. He could climb a jagged paper birch-tree, and he swarmed up a low-branched balsam or spruce with increasing agility, to the terror of lynx,

which, when Two Toes's pack came to the play, played to the death, unless the big cat tired out the wolves by leaping from tree to tree, or escaped over a cliff of stones.

One night they were ranging through the woods when they came to the trail of a man. They turned back from it, but they had not gone many miles before they struck the same man's trail again. They struck it again a third time, and on the other side was the lake.

They were surrounded by a trail marked by a series of cuts on the trees and a strong odor. Two Toes backed away from the menace, and then followed it along for miles, his pack trailing after him in his tracks.

They had never found a man's trail in the heart of their own country before, and Two Toes had to determine wherein that trail was dangerous and wherein it was not dangerous. That yellow blazed line through the woods might be a circlet that would narrow and hedge them in.

Two Toes crossed the trail first. He used infinite caution, and made a high, far spring to do it. His pack followed him faithfully, one by one, each watched anxiously by the others. Nothing happened.

The wolves gave over the latter part of the night and the morning that followed to hunting, for they were hungry. The following night they returned to the trail, and Two Toes studied it. He went ranging to determine its extent. They found bark teepees freshly built in the woods. They found little cabins, of the right size for a rabbit, which the man had built. They found many things to add to their disquiet.

They went down to Pukaso, where men had lived before they were born, where the cabins had long been abandoned and were now a happy hunting-ground for porcupines. They crossed the clearing fearlessly, Two Toes walking in the sand, and they headed up the lake shore toward Otter Harbor. While French Louie became acquainted with their tracks at Pukaso, they dreamed uneasily of his trail

two or three miles back from his main cabin, where the wolves were resting for the day.

## V

FRENCH LOUIE was as much a part of the wilderness as moose or wolf or fisher. He had certain habits, just as the wild creatures have certain habits; he had certain notions, just as they have certain notions. He differed from other trappers just as Two Toes differed from other wolves, or as an old silver fox differs from an old red fox.

Just as an old wolf seeks the deeper wilderness, French Louie sought the country unfrequented by his own kind. An old trapper is a good deal of a recluse and miser in his work, however fond he may be of people when his work is done.

The lines that French Louie ran through the green timber were beautiful specimens of woodcraft. They followed easy grades. They took advantage of flats, hillsides, level ridge-backs, gaps in mountain ranges, and narrow gorges over streams where two poles would serve for a safe bridge. At the same time every line he ran cut through the heart of the ranges of the fur colonies.

There was something uncanny in the certainty with which he struck into the valleys where the mink were most plentiful, into the land of broken rocks where the lynx followed the cliffs of stone, up the long slopes where the fisher, far wanderers, were sure to roam, and through the mountain gaps where all the woods life was certain to pass and repass the engines of destruction which it was his business to lay in the way of the fur-wearers.

It was the wolves, however, above all others, that felt the prescience of French Louie. They found his lines laid into their favorite hunting-grounds. There was a big pack of fourteen wolves up Swallow River way. They hunted in a great swamp up from the lake—and French Louie's route skirted that swamp.

In their lighter moments the Swallow

River wolves would romp and play along the sand beach just south of the mouth of Wolf River. French Louie ran a line down to that neighborhood. They used a low gap through the rock ridge on the south of Swallow River Valley. French Louie's path did not go through that gap—of course not! But his lines touched both ends of it.

Away inland there was a pack of wolves which had never seen a man. They had smelled only a few mild specimens who crossed the Hudson Bay Trail north out of Michipicoten, and once in a while two or three who ventured up one of the rivers into their hunting country. Right across their range, from side to side, was now slashed a human whose odor raised the hair on those wolves' backs and made them utter low, angry growls.

So it was with twelve or fifteen packs which had lived for many years on the east shore, in the territory between Michipicoten and Pic River—a hundred and twenty miles along the lake shore, and containing five thousand square miles of wilderness, from the burned blueberry lands along the railroad to the pole-spruce knolls deep in the broken stone country, where the gallop of a scared moose could be heard a mile when his antlers were hard, for the striking and pounding of his horns against the standing timber.

The mere presence of a man in that region was a suspicion that changed the habits of the wolves the day they found that he was there. They ran at night. The bold hunters who had been stirring around more or less in the daytime now retreated to thickets, and stayed in them during most of the hours when formerly they had roamed freely.

Some young and inexperienced wolves did not understand. Some of them were natural born stupid. As a result, these were the first to feel the onslaught of French Louie. It was the fate of four pups that helped other wolves to learn something of the menace that was upon them.

These pups hunted through the easy going of a swamp just north of Twin Falls River. They lived back from the lake, in a territory of bare, glacier-rounded stone tops and deep, heavily timbered gullies. They slept up on the sides of the rocky knolls, under little bushes, on the lee side when the breeze was cold, and on the warm side when the sun was out. They might just as well have been deer fawns, for all they knew about coping with a wolver who understood all the arts of still-hunting for wolves.

French Louie, blazing his lines across the green-timber land, had found more wolf-tracks than he had ever seen before; more signs of moose and rabbit and grouse, which accounted for the presence of so many wolves; more traces of fisher, mink, fox, and lynx, too, for that matter, but particularly he saw the wolf-tracks.

"Now, by gar!" he exulted. "I keep my eye peeled, an' I peel some tam good wolfs, I bet, by gar!"

French Louie was an old-fashioned trapper, but he carried up-to-date weapons. During this line-blazing, trap-setting period he toted a twenty-two-caliber repeating rifle. With this he could kill all the bait that he needed for traps in which he used meat—birds, rabbits, squirrels, and the like.

He carried hooks and lines, however, to catch fish for certain of his sets which required fish for their perfection of temptation. For many traps he carried no bait at all, but made blind sets—the deadliest sets of all for certain classes of animals.

In his belt he had a "pistol," which shot a thirty-caliber bullet and had a range of several hundred yards. This was not a hunting weapon, though he could kill game with it, if he desired. It was a weapon of defense which French Louie had to have—and lack of which has left many a trapper to fall before the rush of a pack of hungry wolves. There were several wolves in this green timber country which had tasted and liked the



flesh of man. Two of them were in Two Toes's pack.

While French Louie was working—while he was blazing his lines, building the wigwams and cubbies, and brushing the trails—he had little time to hunt. He made enough noise in the woods to alarm the wild game. He startled the moose from their beds, and the wolves heard him long before he came in sight of them.

But when it was time to set the traps, all the noisy work was done. With low-barking twenty-two-caliber shells, French Louie killed rabbits and grouse for bait—occasionally a red squirrel, too—slipping through the woods as silently as a wolf itself.

Having hung up and frozen rabbits and grouse along his line, he left the little twenty-two repeater at home on some trips, and carried, instead, his "wolf gun." This was a twenty-two-caliber rifle shooting a bullet at twenty-eight hundred feet a second, or thereabouts. When the bullet hit a wolf, it exploded like a snowball against a rock.

With that rifle French Louie became a hunter as well as a trapper. He slipped away from his line and circled over to the wolf runways that he had discovered—the gaps through the ridges, the old burnings, and the bare knolls where young wolves enjoyed the sun. His trails were blazed for his traps, but he by no means kept to the trails. He would hurry over them, and often, because his wigwams were near together, he would steal two or three hours a day for hunting—for "wolfing," as he called it.

He did not disdain to kill a fox, a marten, a fisher, if he met one. But his main object was to kill wolves, and he hunted where his instinct, developed by fifty years of wilderness work, told him that wolves would lie.

So he crossed Twin Rock River and skirted the edge of the swamp, where young wolves were sure to be hunting rabbits and grouse. He found where they followed up a ravine of easy grade, making a veritable runway with their

narrow claws and paws. He could tell by the way they scrambled along that they were young wolves—even if he had not recognized their youth by the prints they made in the mud and sand.

Back among the rounded granite tops he grinned to himself.

"By gar! Dem wolfs is lie in the sun, an' warm theirselves! By gar, I bet I warm dem up, too, if I see dem, quick!"

He circled around among the stone knolls, and peeked and peered and blinked. He hunted down the warm rays of sunshine. With his back to the sun, he stood in his own shadow, while the animals ahead of him would stand out in the bright light. That was the first strategy of his wolfing.

Raising his head above the level crest of a mossy granite top, he looked seventy yards away to the sunny side of another granite top. Between was a ravine so deep that the trees in it did not rise to the level of the rocks. On the opposite hill grew some dwarf spruces, surrounded by shrubs and deep moss.

There, gray and plain in the sunshine, against the background of dark green and purple, were two wolves, about ten feet apart. A little beyond there was another wolf, and a fourth was idly scratching his sleepy ear where a belated bluebottle fly had annoyed his comfort.

French Louie pressed his lips firmly together, for fear he would shout with exultation. He drew up the fatal white bead and caught it against the side of the scratching wolf, through the round ring behind the breech. He pressed the trigger. The wolf was thrown violently against the shrubs behind him, and half-way through them.

Up sprang the other three wolves, and French Louie struck one of them with death before they had blinked twice in the blinding sunshine. A third wolf he picked off as it turned frantically; the fourth he missed because of Gallic excitement and exultation, as it threw itself sidewise and endwise over the crest of stone and out of sight.

The beast that escaped was now a candidate for admittance to Two Toes's band of wit-sharpened wolves!

## VI

FRENCH LOUIE crossed the deep ravine and threw his three victims down side by side. He laughed at them, jeered them, and insulted them.

"By gar!" he growled. "Yo' fellers make me tired! Three two-dollaire skin, an' yo' make a bigger load dan forty mink, wort' t'ree hundert dollaire! By gar! A man a tam fool, lug yo' fellers aroun'! By gar!"

French Louie cursed and blackguarded the wolves that he killed with fond emphasis and joyous exultation. Every time he killed a wolf he regarded it as a victory, a compliment to his own skill, a relief for his pent-in feelings.

To hear him talk, taking no notice of his triumphant tone, one would have supposed that wolves were the least worthy of his pursuits, that he obtained them by accident, and that his real efforts were concentrated on worth-while creatures—mink, marten, fisher, lynx, and the like. The fact was that French Louie would neglect all other game for the pleasure of circumventing a wolf, even if it were only an ignorant wolf-pup.

So French Louie drew out his skinning-knife, lamenting that he had to dull its blade on the coarse fibers of a hairy wolf-skin. He stripped the hides off as if he detested that work more than anything else in the world. All the way home to his main camp on Otter Bay he grumbled and cursed and shook his shaggy head, complaining about lugging such a heavy load for so small a recompense as the value of the skins and the government reward.

"By gar! A li'l marten, one I put in my pocket, wort' more dan all dis back-breaker load!" he growled.

Nevertheless, when he had stretched his wolf-skins on great hoops, fleshed them, and hung them up under his fur-shed, he looked at them long and admiringly.

"By gar!" he grumbled. "By gar! Der is some satisfact' to keel sooch tam nuisances. By gar! Dat's right, ole feller!"

Some satisfaction? Why, if French Louie had to trap in a country where there were no wolves he would feel that he was like a little boy running up and down a brook across the middle of a farm. Not bears, nor lynx, nor fisher, nor foxes could bring one-half the pleasure to him that he found in "foolin' dem tam old wolfs!"

He did not content himself with merely hunting for wolves. He set traps for them. He had more wolf-traps in proportion to his line than any other trapper. His monkeying with mink, marten, muskrats, was strictly for commercial reasons. He liked the five dollars which a nice little black Canadian mink brought him. He was exuberant over a twenty-dollar stone-marten. He would dance a step or two when he ran into a lynx, especially when it was sitting quiet, not pulling a bit at a No. 1 mink-trap. Next to wolves he regarded a captured fisher with pleasure, because a fisher always tore up his trap cubbies and chewed everything in reach.

"By gar! Yo' tam fisher, yo' tam pekan! Yo' make a feller work! By gar! Yo' son of a goon! I feex yo'!" he would say, grimacing and jumping and growling, for he liked a fighting pekan.

Foxes he did not know what to think of. He despised them, and yet they surprised him with their little tricks. He would call a fox a muskrat, just to insult him, and then he would call him next brother to a wolf. Sometimes a fox would display great spirit, and again one would show no more judgment or heart than a rabbit.

His joy was great as he saw more and more that he was in a land of wolves. Wolves evidently dominated this country, just as rabbits or deer or foxes or skunks dominate the wild life of certain other localities.

"By gar! I do belief dat I foun' my wolf-pocket at las'!" French Louie gri-

maced and danced. "Wolfs—wolfs—wolfs! Everywhere is dem wolfs! By gar! Come deep snow, an' dem fellers get hongry—by gar! I bet dem tam wolfs like to set deir teeths into dem tough bones an' muscles dat I got! By gar! W'at dey miss in fat, I bet dey take op in consolation dat it's me! Well, I won't let no tam wolfs drive me out. Too mooch mink, too goot marten, fisher, fox, muskrats aroun'! By gar!"

Let the wolves drive him out? French Louie wouldn't have left that country if he didn't find a mink, a marten, or any other sign than that of wolves. All other trapping was to him as nothing, if he could not trap for wolves. Back on Pigeon River wolves had grown so scarce that he could hardly see a track there—and he would have stopped trapping altogether, if he had not found the country north and east of Otter Cove.

Wolves were not just wolves to French Louie. After he killed the three wolf-pups—seven or eight months old, perhaps ten months—the one that got away was an individual to him. The survivor held his hind legs in such a way that his hind paws turned in ever so little.

"By gar! Yo' knock-kneed li'l' scoundrel!" the old trapper growled. "W'at yo' t'ink I am? Yo' get away from me, eh? By gar!"

Two days later he was twenty miles back on his line, between two wigwams, when he stopped beside a stillwater on Twin Falls River. At the outlet of the stillwater was a bar of fine, white sand. In the sand was the track of a wolf that had stepped there to drink.

"By gar! Yo' knock-kneed son of a goon!" he cried. "Yo' coom 'way back here to trouble me? I show yo', by gar! I feex yo'!"

Knock Knee and Two Toes thus became personalities to French Louie.

"Dat scoundrel Swaller Riyer gang!" he went on. "By gar! Dem's bad eggs, an' I bet dey make a beeg combamba nex' February, when dey get hongry! By gar! I bettaire go back to Coldwell for

February! Dat's right! I ain' no business aroun' when dem Swaller River fellers coom roonin' aroun', eatin' op me an' anyt'ing else dey want! By gar!"

Knock Knee traveled alone for weeks. He was a lost and lonely soul in the green timber. The snow which soon covered the ground to a depth of a few inches showed his tracks wandering far through the woods, without a fixed range or a hole that he could call his own.

He turned back from the tracks of other wolves. He hunted rabbits and grouse alone. He followed the runways of moose, and he looked back often, as if he feared the very shadows of the moon that was shining.

"By gar!" French Louie shook his head, after following the track of Knock Knee for an hour or two, just to see what he was up to. "By gar! Now ain' a wolf a funny tam feller? How yo' goin' to tell what a feller like dat Knock Knee goin' to do nex'? By gar! Dat feller sly like a cat! He lay down an' wait fer a rabbit to coom to heem, by gar! Dat's w'at he do! He don' waste himse'f, runnin' his tam laigs off; he get fat, waitin' fer somet'ing to eat, by gar! Dat's Knock Knee!"

The snow told French Louie what the wild life of his range was doing. He could read the tracks of many animals in the sand and mud and moss, but now he had a plainly printed page to reveal everything that went on in the woods. The very dust of the tree-bark told him of the grouse that roosted in the branches, and of the squirrel runways along limbs above the snow. As for the hog-wallowing trail of a porcupine, or the graceful traceries of ermine and deer mice and fox-trails—French Louie had so much reading to do that he could hardly contain himself for delight.

Just imagine having five thousand square miles of library page, reprinted every day or two, and continued in our next—stories told and never read, and stories told and read, by the hundred!

Two Toes and his band distinguished

themselves by appearing on Swallow River, at the head of Twin Falls River, and down at the mouth of Pukaso, on the same snow in three days. The other wolf-packs might remain in their own territory, like home bodies, but not Two Toes.

"By gar! Dat feller is one tam old boy to get dar! Some day dat feller get et up by dem other fellers! Dey ain' likely glad to have so many aroun' huntin' meat off what dey want demselves. If dey want to eat one another out of everyt'ing, w'y, let 'em! Bimeby dey all get together an' raise trouble, anyhow, dey will! Beeg old pack run together, an' chase—mebby dey chase me all aroun' an' op a tree! By gar! I bet I don' forget my li'l' shoot-pistol, no, by gar! I need dat pistol, I bet. Goot t'ing I didn't forget dat pistol. Twenty-two bait-gun not hurt a wolf. By gar! I wan' a gun dat shoots ten times ten, by gar! Fust t'ing I know, I have a hunder' wolfs chasin' me like a tam lynx all over dem woods. By gar! I bet I squawk ef dem fellers bit my ham! I bet I would, for a fact! By gar!"

French Louie squawked before he was bitten. He had three traps set along the top of a low ridge, for fisher, about three miles out from his first wigwam. Upon reaching the first of the three, he found just the torn paw of a fisher dangling from the trap, which swung on the well-sweep pole.

He looked at the snow, and there was a wolf-track—unmistakably the track of Two Toes. In spite of the smell of steel, Two Toes had pulled the fisher out and carried it back to his waiting crew, and then the pack had pulled it to pieces and eaten it.

"Dat—dat tam scoundrel! By gar! Steal my fisher—twenty dollaire! More dan four wolfs is wort'! By gar!"

At the next trap the well-sweep pole was pulled clear out of the fork, and a fisher had been torn up and eaten.

French Louie squawked and danced up and down in the snow.

"There! By gar! I was a tam fool to leave Pigeon River. Now I suffer from dem tam wolfs. By gar!"

## VII

TWO TOES and his band liked not the presence of a man in their territory, in a land which for ages had been reserved to the uses and purposes of animals that walked or ran on four paws and birds that flew on wings. The appearance in that region of a thing which walked on two legs and left a trail that never wore out, that smelled of steel and tobacco and burned powder and brass or copper cartridges, was an insult and an outrage. Every wolf knew, too, that it was a menace.

The intruder was a man, and he was a thoroughly bad man. That was demonstrated by the fact that one day he left the carcasses of three skinned wolves in the crotches of young birch-trees, carried the skins home, and hung them up in his den of chopped tree-trunks built upon the ground.

The man scented the woods over several hundred square miles. He filled the balsam breeze out of the swamps with a mean and disgusting odor. He appeared in the highways of the wilderness, just where a wolf would naturally roam, and spoiled them for any self-respecting animal with a nose for anything at all. He left his footprints in the sand beside streams, in the deep moss across runways, where a wolf pursuing a rabbit was sure to come upon it, and to be scared out of his wits, not knowing whether it was a trap or a snack of poison.

Take it up the Twin Falls River. There was a delightful rabbit swamp up there, and one evening Two Toes was in full cry after a big rabbit. His pack was scattered around, lurking beside runways, waiting for the quarry to dash by close enough to catch. Two Toes had nothing on his mind except that rabbit. Suddenly, right under his nose, there was the scent of a human—that Otter Cove human!



Two Toes rose seven feet in the air and returned to the earth struggling as he fell, fearful that he would land in a steel trap of some kind. The rabbit cut a corner and escaped.

All the joy of the chase, all lust for rabbit food, went out of the wolf's mind in an instant. He couldn't smell anything but that human for days, every time he thought about it. His followers were vastly annoyed, too—except two of them who licked their chops when they passed the trail of the man.

These two had eaten man. Though the liking for man meat is an acquired taste, and a wolf must be very, very hungry indeed to overcome his loathing and horror for the human odor, once one has bored through and wrenched out a good, smoking chunk of flesh—ignoring the strange hide over most of a human's carcass, and getting right in to the warm blood—once tasted, one never forgets the savor of it!

So if Two Toes had no memory of a feast to offset the horror of his own remembered experience in a steel trap, he had two followers who did not loathe a human with the same sensation that he did. Their horror of guns, poisons, steel, and all those deadly perils was tempered by the taste that they had acquired. They lingered in the neighborhood of the tracks, and from their example Two Toes reasoned that the tracks in themselves were not dangerous.

Having made that observation, Two Toes immediately changed his tactics. Instead of shunning the man-trail, he searched along it, seeking knowledge of its peculiarities.

He found that the steel which bit so cruelly appeared only at intervals, and that between the huts that contained steel were those suspicious yellow blazes on the spruce-trees. Giving these trees a wide berth, Two Toes nevertheless found the range of the man, and made up his mind that as a rule the human stuck as close to his trail as a fisher or an otter to its runway.

Having made up his mind to this, Two Toes ventured in closer to the steel. His first real venture with the thing was when he saw a rabbit struggling and dangling at the end of a chain on a pole. With infinite caution, running his paws under the dirt, boring along, he arrived within snapping distance of that rabbit, and he risked a tentative bite.

Having cautiously pulled the rabbit, and nothing having happened, he tried it again and again, till finally the rabbit fell out of the chain. Two Toes carried it away from the trail and from the steel, and he and his band cautiously dissected it, to make sure that there was nothing in the warm meat to injure a wolf. They ate the rabbit, but can hardly be said to have enjoyed the meal.

That night it snowed, and the snow covered the work of the wolf, so that the man did not discover what had happened to the rabbit in his trap.

The wolves, working around, after they had caught enough wild game to satisfy them, watched Two Toes try further experiments with death along the trapper's trail. They sat back, or lay with their jaws on their forepaws, watching their leader creep up to the line. They saw him walk along right in the man's trail—walk with the slow gait of a bear, putting down his paws and boring under the surface, looking for a hidden trap. They saw him study a trap-line cubby for an hour, pointing at it as motionless as a cat waiting for game.

They saw him go up to a fighting pekan—a foolish creature as regards traps—which was hanging in the air, dangling at the end of a chain. Two Toes killed the fisher with a bite, and then pulled it away. He brought it out to the other members of the pack, and they tore it to pieces.

They did the same to another fisher. Two Toes had a scare as he bit into that second pekan, for something pierced and hurt his paw as he chanked against the tough meat. He snapped at the place that hurt, and pulled out the quill of a

porcupine. Every one knows that pekans eat porcupines, and in devouring a pekan a wolf is likely to find porcupine-quills in its hide and hair.

The other wolves would not take any such chances as Two Toes ran. They let him go in and make the kills. They sat back, their mouths watering, as Two Toes tore the trap cubbies to pieces, one by one, and pulled out of them sweet morsels of rabbit meat, or grouse, or squirrel. Two Toes ate these himself, having bitten them through and through to make certain that they did not contain any bitter flavor or questionable taste of any kind. He was well warned about the strange things that men left around in chunks of meat, waiting for wolves to eat them and die.

He found none of these bitter things until they ran across a young moose that lay dead near a little pond in a swamp of balsams. Moose die once in a while, and the wolves walked in to this one with care, but with no extraordinary suspicion, till they caught the unappetizing whiff of a man's trail. They could see the track in the snow, too.

As they circled by, they came upon a wolf-track, made by one of those Twin Falls River wolves. Following it, they found the wolf dead a few jumps out in the swamp. His jaws had a violent odor—an odor which, as Two Toes learned from his more experienced mates, always appeared in the jaws of wolves that died thus. It was the same that was sometimes perceptible on the carcass of a kill, or on chunks of tallow and fat spread temptingly about. This moose was a kill, for there was much blood around, which does not appear when an animal has died some natural death in the woods.

All of Two Toes's pack ventured up to the carcass of the moose, and made tentative sniffs and nibbles at it. They ate with great caution, and did not once lose their watchfulness in their hunger. Then, having eaten a good meal, two of them turned away and trotted toward the outlet of the pond.

There was a little draw or gully between two very low knolls in the swamp. Here an opening broke through a little thicket of balsam and spruce treelets, on the way to water.

The leading wolf, thirsty after his meal, stretched his head out and forced his way through the branches of those little treelets. Suddenly a bent birch sapling straightened up. With a harsh gurgle, the wolf was jerked six feet clear of the ground and hung there struggling helplessly in mid air.

Instantly the other wolves understood what had happened. They had entered among a nest of snares and poisons.

They dashed away in panic fear. Twenty jumps away one of them was rushing between two rocks, where the ground was sheltered by a thick mass of spruce and balsam branches overhead. There something closed on his forepaw and tripped him up, throwing him with an agonized yelp upon the ground. All the wolves heard the clank of steel and the rattle of chain.

Two Toes and the four remaining animals made their escape. They ran for miles away from the scene of the disaster. They cowered in the densest thickets they could find; they hid in rock crevices; they drank water out of brooks with suspicion. When trying to run down a rabbit they would leap sidewise with a sudden yelp of terror as some branch brushed them or moss slipped under their paws.

Knock Knee, the latest recruit of the pack, who had been following in the rear, moved up during these hard days so that he ran third. He chased rabbits around to his waiting mates, and he caught grouse from low branches in the evergreens.

For days and days Two Toes and his unhappy crew slunk and crouched in the most remote parts of their range—in the deepest timber and among the roughest stones. But hunger pressed more and more upon them; they were obliged to wander forth seeking meat to eat. They

could not go far without crossing the runway of the man. They leaped over it six feet in the air, voicing their terror as they landed on the ground, not knowing what pitfall would open under them, what thing would close on their paws and envelope their necks.

They met other wolves in their flights and on their hunts. Panic had seized them all. The taint in the air was sufficient to make them full of the fear of the arch-enemy.

The man's success against them was clear on every loop of his long runway. He hung up wolf after wolf, skinned them, and carried the pelts to the log cabin which smelled more and more of the villainies he had wrought in the happy hunting country of the wolves. Not only wolves, but mink, marten, fisher, lynx, and other creatures added their pelts to that open shack where the trapper hung the skins of his victims.

No sooner had a pack of wolves relaxed its caution ever so little than something happened. Two Toes guarded his own fairly well after the crash that deprived him of two followers. They hunted as far as they could from the trail of the white man, and they ate their meat fresh and smoking.

They caught a young moose and threw him down. They were so hungry that they ate him almost clean. The next time they happened by that way they found that two other wolves, pariahs, had eaten some of what remained of the kill—and both lay stark, with their lips drawn from their teeth. Two Toes and his pack fled from the place!

### VIII

THE wolves could not find any land free from menace. On the southeast side they ran into a human who came up close to Dog River from Michipicoten. On the east side there was a line blazed clear through for a hundred miles or so, from Michipicoten up to the railroad. On the north there were traps for twenty miles below Pic River.

No flight could take them out of the reach of humans. They hunted up and down, crossing the hated trails and sniffing the victims skinned at almost every trap.

If they found dead meat, they circled around it, and tore it to pieces before venturing to eat any of it. But they had to eat some dead meat. The snow was growing deeper, and live game held its scent, so that their keen noses could hardly find it.

Grouse, while storms blew, buried themselves in the loose snow. If one did not happen to pass within a foot or two of the hiding-place, no trace of the bird was wafted down the wind, for the snow held back the scent. Rabbits sat under little balsams for days, without moving, in stormy weather. The hunter beasts, growing hungrier and hungrier, wallowed up and down, nibbling birch twigs, and descending to gummy lichens to fill their aching stomachs.

More and more reckless, the fisher, mink, and marten ran into the trap-line. Abandoning their caution—if they ever had any—they yielded to its temptations and were swung up by the heels. The foxes, too, ventured in close, and some of them were caught. The wolves, including Two Toes, who for a time had grown brash stealing baits, shrank from the fear of death that encircled them.

They found a slain moose near the man's runway. They dug up the remains, but backed away, for the carcass smelled of death. They backed out of the vicinity. Following the trail of the man, they came to great chunks of moose meat hung up in trees. Under the chunks, where the delicious drips were, they smelled steel—the cold steel that would seize upon them without mercy.

Ravenous with hunger, bolder than his mates, Two Toes essayed to reach one of the chunks of meat. He worked his way up to one of the trees, a low-limbed balsam, and crept up out of the snow into the branches, pulling himself up by contortions of his back and scrambling

with all his legs. He reached the level of the meat and snapped into it, where blue jays had been working. No trace of poison hurt his nose, and he chanked at the frozen game again. He pulled it and shook it.

Suddenly the moose ham jerked down, and Two Toes plunged yelping with it. The meat fell upon the trap that had been set under the drips, and for a moment the dull clank of closing jaws gave Two Toes the wolf equivalent of heart failure. He was not caught, however, and the closed trap lay in plain view. Traps in plain view are not dreaded. It is the unseen trap that catches wolves!

The hungry pack fell upon the meat salvaged from among the branches, and found no ill effects from gorging it. From that fact they inferred the probable safety of meat swung high in trees. They tore down two other hams in the same way, Two Toes cutting off the meat and letting it fall, not even finding a trap anywhere around those two pieces.

The wolves did not find any more meat hung up in that way, though they followed the trap-lines for some distance, crossing them here and there; so they returned to robbing the snares of animals caught in them. It seemed safe to pull mink or fisher out of the traps.

One of them was so hungry that he ate a fish which he found on the edge of the Pukaso River. He bolted it whole. Suddenly the fires of the damned struck through him, and Two Toes saw another of his mates tumbling and whirling wildly in the snow. The other wolves set upon the unfortunate victim, trying to steady him, but they only succeeded in biting him. He struggled deliriously till he fell and died.

Two Toes and the survivors fled from the place as accursed. A human—the man whose scent they knew so well—had placed another fatal temptation in their path. Knock Knee moved up a place in the line of the pack. The dead wolf had once helped to eat a man, and now a man had slain him!

Two Toes led his band out into the mid-wilderness, and they ran up to one of the dark, cold wigwams in the green timber. Around the little shelter were odors that reminded the wolves of summer and forest-fires. Two Toes, creeping in, halted within a yard of the pathway by which the human entered his den.

At the very spot where Two Toes stopped were fragments of things to eat. It was meat in a strange form, but so tempting that he tasted it. The meat was in little crumbs, except some big bones. Two Toes nibbled the bones, and then carried one away; for a wolf may as well die of poison as of hunger.

Two Toes ate the marrow and pulled off the gristle. He felt no monitory pangs. He tasted nothing that raised suspicion in his mind. Then one of his pack tried the same trick and came away with another bone.

There were some dead rabbits and grouse hanging on a long pole near the bark wigwam. The wolves dared one another to try to get them. Two Toes took a short run and a flying leap, and the next instant he thought that he was caught in traps and deadfalls, for the birds and animals all came falling down upon him; but he scrambled loose, struggling mightily, his jaws clenched.

He rushed fifty yards away toward his companions, who turned and started to run with him, snapping at his head. They were after the rabbit, which, without knowing it, he had carried away with him. Before he realized the situation his less venturesome mates had taken the head and all four legs, leaving him only the part of the backbone remaining in his jaws. He ate that, and they all sneaked back to eat the other birds and rabbits which the trapper had hung up there for his own use, or for bait.

Their meal finished, the wolves ran away two or three miles and sat around, or lay around, waiting for something to happen to them. Nothing happened, except that their hunger was appeased, and they enjoyed a sense of comfort



which they had not known for a long time. Indeed, they felt so comfortable that they dozed off to sleep.

The following night they began to hunt with something like their old-time spirits. They ran down rabbits, and hunted out two or three partridges in the snow. The remnants of another pack of wolves joined them, making a welcome addition to their fighting force. It was like the triumphant, care-free days of old!

They ran up to the trap-line and yelped at it, jeering. They found a fresh human track, and followed it up to another wigwam. Here they smelled the fire, and the sweet things that a man eats, and they howled at him in the gloom. They defied him, dared him to come out and run a romp with them. They said they would eat the hams off him, and would carry his bones out into the dark places to bury, for a chew some other time. In this grim badinage a wolf who had once helped to kill a trapper took the lead.

Nor did their challenge go unanswered. The human appeared out of his wigwam and yelled back at them. What he said was not in their language, but something of his tone they understood, and they laughed with him.

"By gar!" he shrieked. "How can a man sleep wit' you fellers make such a hullybub aroun'? Shut up, you gray ghosts, shut up! Or, by gar, I shoot de stuffin' out of you!"

They interchanged compliments for a while; then, tiring of the noisy talk, the man returned into his wigwam, while the wolves withdrew mile by mile till their howls had awakened the other hunting tribes. They had had enough to eat, and they went to their rest.

Before they went to sleep they heard other wolves in full chase in two directions—the Swallow River pack and the Pukaso tribe.

"Now, if we were hungry," Two Toes and his mates said to themselves, "we would go and help them to hunt, but we have had plenty to eat, and are warm and sleepy. To-morrow we shall have to keep

our eyes open, for that human might follow our tracks!"

They were not followed that day, and the next night, circling around to see what the man had been up to, they found a place where he had hung up more meat. He had killed a young moose, and they longed to eat some of it, but a suspicious odor betrayed the purpose to which he had put it. Passing again two days later, just to take a look at it, they found that the Pukaso wolves had come that way, and four of them were stretched dead in the snow.

"You see how it is!" Two Toes indicated with a growl.

They retreated and, being lucky, killed a hungry deer which had wandered up from around the Soo woods. They ate him to the marrow. They could stand it for a week now.

As they headed away, looking for a good place to lie down, they heard the rattle of a chain. Turning that way with utmost caution, they discovered a lynx in a trap. Could anything be funnier than that?

With a rush they started in to plague the big cat; but before ever they reached the lynx Knock Knee and another wolf were tripped up and held fast, yelping with agonized fear. The lynx was a deadly live bait for playful wolves!

Two Toes and the others turned at the sound of closing steel jaws and rattling chains, leaving their luckless companions to be skinned in a day or two.

## IX

FRENCH LOUIE grimaced and pranced around. Wolves had made to him the grand insult! Wolves had deprived him of the mere pittance upon which he depended for his little living! Worst of all, wolves had jeered at his skill as a trapper!

"By gar!" he swore roundly. "I feex dem fellers! By tam, I feex 'em!"

Accordingly, he began to play tricks upon the wolves. He left poison baits scattered around with a cunning appear-

ance of carelessness. One of these was a fish caught in a fork where a spring-hole kept the water of the river open; and when he found the dead wolf, with the tracks of Two Toes scattered around the carcass, and gashes in the victim's hide, he leaped and pranced again.

"By gar!" he sang. "By gar! Dem fellers spoil dat good hide! By gar! Dey tear two dollaire out of dat hide! Dem sons of goons!"

He celebrated Christmas in his main cabin on Otter Cove. He cooked meat, birds, roots, and pastries. He went without his breakfast, in order to have a better appetite for dinner. He smoked his pipe only once during the morning, in order to enjoy his after-dinner smoke the more keenly.

He brought out a bottle of wine, which he had in his root-cellar, and danced an Indian corn-dance around the table, chanting the song of his own joy of life. He went out to his fur-house, and looked at the hides that he had hung up there. He pointed his finger at a red squirrel, and chattered at him so long that the squirrel fairly screeched with indignation. Then French Louie laughed and tossed the "leetle feller" a handful of crackers, saying:

"Dat feller need de Chris'mas, too, by gar!"

Chickadees dropped down out of the neighboring evergreens and perched on his cap, his shoulders, and his fingers. French Louie's fingers were not so different from the bark of tree-limbs in color and roughness.

All that bright, cold day he rested and committed himself to the spirit of the hour. Around his main camp little was ever disturbed. White hares fed on the peelings from his roots and apples. Mice and flying squirrels coursed through his cabin, robbing him of the crumbs on his table. He would search, swearing quaint Gallic oaths, for the holes by which they entered, but for some reason he would fail to find the holes.

When a white weasel added the cabin

to his runway, when mice rained squeaking out of the roof, or the weasel darted its evil little head into the room, its beady eyes shining in the red lights from the stove, French Louie would swear and quiver and exclaim—but not loud enough really to alarm the little visitor. Even a porcupine, best of bait for a fisher, would gnaw and grunt and claw at the log where the trapper emptied out his salty dish-water, and perchance dropped a handful of salt by accident—though French Louie swore to the heavens that it was not his intention to give the porcupine and rabbits the salt that they craved.

"By gar! Dat quill-pig, he insult me! By gar! He come an' insult me by my own door!" the trapper yelled. "He make me de gran' insult! I feex him! Me French Louie, de trap-man, an' he come right up here! By gar! I make de fisher-bait of dat feller! I feex heem! I set de trap, I put out de p'ison, I make de cunnin' snare—I feex dat feller of a quill-pig! By gar!"

By all his forest gods he swore that he would do it, but the porcupine continued to gnaw away at the log and grunt, awakening French Louie at midnight, so that he could not go to sleep again for as much as five minutes or so.

At his line wigwams he told himself that the woods creatures would drive him out of house and home. In one cabin a big white owl perched itself near the peak, on a cross brace-bar, finding entrance through the smoke-hole. French Louie looked at the bird with real astonishment.

"By gar!" he whispered, as the owl leaned over and began to click its bill like a parrot. "By gar! You son of a goon! By gar! Yo' tak' my wigwam, an' I sleep out in de cold, by gar! I bet you bring de bad luck on me eef I don' treat you right, eh? By gar!"

When he first crawled into the wigwam, French Louie had been tired, hungry, and in a hurry to go to sleep. Seeing the bird against the smoke-hole, he froze where

he crawled, talking softly to the big owl. He backed out and poked a dead white rabbit into the opening; and instantly the bird dived down to seize it.

"By gar!" French Louie grunted. "Dat feller eat up my bait! I am helpless! By gar! Dat tam feller!"

Nevertheless, when the bird had the rabbit up on its perch and was contentedly picking out the soft spots, he entered with great caution, swearing at the owl in the most gentle and soothing of tones.

"By gar!" he told the visitor, "I must have a fire, I must! I won't be driven out by no tam white owl!"

He did build a fire, of the driest sticks he had, so that there would be no smoke. The owl took turns in cursing French Louie for the uprising stream of hot air, eating the rabbit, and walking sidewise on its perch to find the place of least disturbance.

At the camp where Two Toes tore down the game-pole on which French Louie had hung bait and meat, the old trapper cursed wolves up and down for hours. He declared that he would poison all the meat in the woods. He affirmed that he would never, never leave a camp without a double line of traps and double doses of poison in every morsel of meat; but he did nothing of the kind. He hung up the same pole, hunted half a day to get more meat to hang on it, and left it as free as it had been before.

"I one big tam fool!" he cursed himself. "By gar! I forgot to set dem traps, put in dat p'ison! Some tam Two Toes come along now an' eat up all my meat! By gar! Come right up to my house an' home an' eat me out! By gar! I feex dem! I make a deadfall, a snare in my wigwam, dat's what I'll do. Tam quill-pig, tam white owl, tam old weasel insult me! By gar! I go to de city, nex'! I go where dey shovel de sidewalk an' don' wear snow-shoe! Dat what I do, by gar! Tam live stock drive me out'n de woods!"

French Louie's traps were set half a mile from his main and line cabins.

Beyond that distance he placed his temptations and allayed the suspicions of his victims with all the deadly and almost unerring skill at his command.

He worked against the Swallow River pack of wolves, and followed up their tracks till he knew all the individuals by the shape of their paws and the drag or set of their footprints. He knew when one of the Pukaso wolves quit his pack and crossed over to the Twin Falls pack. He yelped with interest and excitement when first he discovered the footprint of Knock Knee in the trail of Two Toes.

"By gar!" he gasped. "Ain' dat one funny t'ing? W'at a feller do about dat? By gar! I feex dem fellers!"

When the snow became too deep for comfortable walking, French Louie put on the light snow-shoes which he carried as soon as danger of deep snow was indicated by the almanac. He carried a leather pack by a tump-line over his forehead and shoulder-straps. When he was hunting, he could slip the tump-line and turn his head any way he wished, though in straight away packing he carried the weight on his forehead.

He glided through the woods, walking with springing, graceful steps. Over his trail, or through fair timber, he touched nothing as he curved along among the tree-trunks. He could still-hunt on his snow-shoes, which he kept soft, so that they would not creak.

He saw many animals as he traveled. He shot a fisher or two every round of his traps. He killed a good many foxes, including one coal-black one which he struck in the ear with a twenty-two-long bullet. Every day he saw a moose or two, and sometimes, in a yard, he met a dozen.

Snow-storms alternated with bright, sunny days, but the winter grew steadily colder. The animals that French Louie found in his traps had less and less fat on them. The grouse tasted of balsam, and were no longer good to eat. The rabbits grew rapidly scarcer, for their kind now furnished almost the only food for many birds and beasts—owls and

foxes, wolves, fisher, marten, and lynx. The snow displayed a thousand tragedies.

French Louie followed up the places where wolves chased moose across his trap-lines. He looked at the moose, and shook his head as he saw the hair of the animals growing long and their bones showing plainer and plainer "on the points."

### X

HARD times were already in the wilderness when a rain began to fall in early February. French Louie remembered one or two such storms in the past. The rain was a sleet, not quite hail, nor yet soft rain. At first it fell noiselessly, in scattering drops, the wind whistling around and boring through the openings among the trees. It felt almost warm, and the trapper, struggling along in snow that crumpled under his feet, sweated and swore.

"By gar! Now a feller mos' freeze to death, an' now he bile like a tam stew-pot, by gar!"

Little whiffs of steam swirled up around the trapper, and he likened himself to a team of horses after a race on the ice. He lamented that now he would not be good to eat, for, when an animal sweats, the meat sours.

He looked at his snow-shoes anxiously, for they loaded up with damp snow, and to their weight were added three or four weights of snow. He had to cut and carry a short club with which to tap the rim of the shoes, so as to jar off the snow. He tapped hard, and every tap bruised the rawhide along the rim, which was softened by the wet snow. He did not think of that at the moment, but he remembered it afterward.

French Louie had a great deal to think about in that lengthening way from his second wigwam to his third, for the miles that he covered were three times as difficult as in cold weather, when the snow-shoes did not load. In the wet snow he sank much deeper than even in loose, newly fallen snow. He toiled on, slower

and slower, the spring gone from his knees and the flow of words whispered under his breath.

"I am growin' old," he thought. "My muscles are stiff. A mile more, but it is dark, and my pack is heavy. By gar, I b'lieve I mus' res'!"

He would force himself to walk a hundred steps, and then he would stop in his tracks. The wigwam was just over the ridge ahead, and down in the swamp beyond. That last two-hundred-yard climb forced him to rest three times; but once over the top he could wallow and swing down the slope beyond, carried by gravity, and stumbling every rod or two. In the swamp he forced himself through, and fell upon the balsam boughs of his wigwam, so tired that he could only just breathe.

By and by he shed his pack, sat up, started a fire in the stone pit, and basked by the red warmth. Without exertion one soon chilled, though it was not very cold outside, for it was still raining. He put on a pail of water which he dipped out of the spring at the side of the wigwam. A handful of tea in the kettle boiled up into a stimulant, and a cupful of the brew revived the trapper's exhausted heart.

He broiled a slab of moose-meat over the fire, and ate it. Then, rolling up in his rabbit-skin blanket on the boughs, he slept like a bear all through the night, and long after breakfast-time and daylight in the morning.

When at last he awoke the woods were roaring and cracking. The rain that was falling clattered and buzzed. At intervals he heard the crash of a tree falling, near or far away. It seemed as if everything clicked and snapped or creaked stiffly, instead of the usual soft, sliding, purring sounds of the deep wilderness.

"By gar!" French Louie cried, springing up, and then stopping in mid effort, to swear at a crick in his back, a cramp in both legs, and a sore place on each shoulder.

Having rubbed the hooked-up places, he straightened himself and crawled out-



doors to look around. No sooner had he raised the flap of white birch-bark that served as a door than he saw what had happened.

A glare of ice was upon the snow. It was not an ordinary coat of crust, but a sheet of ice that grew thicker and thicker with each greaselike splash, as myriads of drops fell to the ground and congealed.

No wonder the trees cracked and groaned! No wonder the woods were full of squeaks and clatterings and breakings! Every limb drooped, and every tree-top bent under a crystal casing of sleet. The evergreen branches were bridged with ice, and the maples and birches were bending and shaking under an increasing burden of glassy armor.

The wilderness was quivering, so that everything was in a blur. At frequent intervals the fibers of weakling branches reached the limit of their strength, and with a crash they stripped down. Then a burdened tree would stagger up, having been lightened a little. A little later the same tree would be sagging again, over and over.

When some branches broke, they fell through other branches beneath them, and stripped all the limbs on that side of the tree to the ground. Then the ice on the other side would pull down the tree in that direction. Perhaps, half-way up, at some dead limb knot, the trunk would give way, and a jagged, yellow-splintered stub would stick up—soon to be festooned and fantastically frosted and coated with ice again—but damaged now beyond further injury!

French Louie stared speechless at the spectacle that confronted his gaze. It was the most wonderful wilderness sight he remembered to have seen.

"By gar!" he whispered. "By gar! Dem poor moose an' wolfs an' rabbits an' birds—dey suffer now! Dey go hongry! By gar! One tam hard t'ing, dis sleet storm! By gar!"

His own wigwam was sagging under its burden, but a hot fire within soon thawed

the under side of the sleet sheet, and the trapper scaled it down. He said a kind of orison over his fire, listening to the anguish of the green timber. Never had he heard a wilderness suffering so before. Never had he foreseen such anguish for all the creatures of the woods!

He sat over his fire, with his hands across his shins and his jaw on his knees, blinking silently for long stretches. He did not like this storm; its assault was too general, its cruelty too penetrating, its success too universal.

"Dem pore chickadee!" He shook his head. "Dem crossbill! Good t'ing dem chickaree lay up seed an' beechnut! All dem pa'tridge sleep in de snow, an' now dey never git out—dey die all starve to deat'! De rabbit, mebbly, he fin' good birch down to eat! Mebbly it get so hard beeg moose run aroun' an' not cut hees laig off. Dem pore owls! I bet dey get icicles on der tails an' horns, by gar!"

Still the rain-drops fell, and the wind scattered them across the trees and splashed them like stiffening grease upon the sleeted timber and glaring crust.

For two days and nights the storm continued unabated. Then the clouds swept by and the stars came out and twinkled in answer to the reflections of their own twinklings and glitterings among the icy tombs and catacombs of the troubled, groaning wilderness.

French Louie heard the storm kick itself out of the country, and he went out to see the clouds withdraw from the face of the sky. He saw the stars peeping through the holes. He retreated into his warm wigwam before the chill frost that fell upon the earth and polished the crystal mantle which draped the forest in a robe of death.

Dawn followed, and with dawn arrived a light wind. The breeze touched the timber and swayed the crystals back and forth. Crystal touched crystal, and the bells began to ring! Every limb was cased in ice, and the ice was like bell-metal—it was bell-metal! The crystal bells were ringing!

French Louie tumbled out of his wigwam and sprang to his feet, his eyes blinking and popping, hardly awake, when he heard the touch of the wind tuning up across the green timber, touching the long, slender hardwood branches, which bent down, every branch a bell, every bell a hammer for the wind to swing.

The old trapper glared with astonishment. He swore aloud, to make sure that this was not the music of his welcome into paradise. Seeing what he saw, he knew that what he heard was the knell of wilderness creatures. Unseen in all directions, incased in ice, death was gripping the tender birds and mammals.

The fisher, marten, lynx, wolves were in no present danger; but the animals upon which they depended for food were perishing that terrible day under the ice. Later, the ravenous flesh-eaters would swarm through the timber, suffering and growing gaunt.

The music was sweet, clear, beautiful. The wind was in a merry mood; its touch was soft and tender, and every bell rang as clear as the song of the hermit thrush, as the lay of the whitethroat!

Shivers of sheer rapture crept up and down the back of French Louie as he listened to those piping strains, themes for a thousand masterpieces, nor was it less beautiful for being the music to which the weaklings of the frozen glades were perishing. It was as if the grouse and rabbits touched the bells in passing.

French Louie, never quite sure where the real things of the wilderness crossed the borderland and became unreal, bent down and looked into the shades beneath the canopy of crystal. His eyes caught the glint of pure red, green, blue—all the colors, reflected by the eastern sun from crystal to crystal, till the last pure, beautiful spark darted up out of a dark recess in the undermost shade of the balsam swamp.

Those bells ringing and those lights flying shortened the old trapper's breath. A kind of ecstasy of wonder and fear silenced his jeering and brought to the

surface the real reverence and love of which, despite his murderous business, he was capable.

During the day that followed he held to his wigwam. He could not venture forth in such a time as that, when every spirit was traveling and every fairy was dancing along, by day as well as by night. These were fairy hours in the sunshine, and a trapper would not care to be brought abroad by the spirits of the woods.

Nothing else seemed to be stirring, either. Not a bird appeared among the branches, not an animal showed itself upon the blue ice that covered the snow. Till wild life broke its way up into the world again it was no time for a human to stir abroad.

On the third night French Louie was awakened by a distant sound. He lay with one ear out of his rabbit-skin blanket, listening. Soon he sat up to listen the better. That was not enough, so he bounded up out of his warm bed and crawled outside of his wigwam, where the frost was snapping and the stars were sparkling.

He heard very plainly then. Away up to the north he heard the distant murmuring of loud voices. The sound approached nearer and nearer. It grew louder and louder, and became fiercer and fiercer. From other directions similar sounds seemed to be pouring into the main source and increasing the undertone. It was the running howl of the fiercest hunting-pack in the world—the long-drawn growl of gathering wolves, pouring by in a red-jawed, smoking-breathed torrent of famine need.

"Wolfs!" French Louie grimaced. "Hongry, starvin' wolfs! By gar! Dey have a loud yell for somet'ing to eat! Hi, hi, hi! Away dey go! French Louie see w'at dey do, down by Pukaso an' aroun'! W'en dey meet French Louie, dey gif a beeg yelp, by gar! Pore tam trapper! Dey bite heem in de ham, an' den dey swaller heem up, smoky chunk by smoky chunk! Dem fellers eat me up,

an' my hide all full of de strychnin! Ain' dat a beeg joke? Den dey t'ink a trapper ees p'ison!"

## XI

THE panic terror of Two Toes and his pack was never so bad as that night when they found the lynx. The big cat seemed a subject for their plaguing. All the wolves had taken turns at teasing trapped lynx, not venturing near the captured animals, and nothing ever had happened. Now every path seemed to contain cunningly hidden traps, and Two Toes himself had escaped only by luck. He had caught the whiff of steel in time to jump over it in his rush to get away from the lynx.

Two Toes retreated into the roughest and rockiest place in all that part of the country. It was a place where probably no man had ever penetrated. There the wolves lurked and crouched and ate the buds of switch birches, afraid to venture forth in any direction. When the weather turned warm, and rain began to fall, they retreated under overhanging stones and into crevices.

Hunger was already in their gaunt flanks when the sleet-storm came upon them. Then followed increasing hunger, increasing ravenous pangs, which they could not appease.

When the storm passed by they left their lairs and began to hunt around for something to eat. They found everything sheeted with ice. They could smell nothing but the pure frost. Hardly an odor of any kind survived that crystal precipitation upon trees and stones.

The very animals were incased in it. Many a rabbit was caught under the lengthening drip and splash till it perished in a cage of ice. As for the grouse that buried themselves in the snow, few escaped in the end.

At first the wolves hunted cautiously along. In their hearts were the terrors inspired by the sudden deaths that had overtaken their fellows—death which they had escaped only by luck.

They searched all that first night, and except for tiny morsels of chickadees which had already starved to death, and occasional mice which were lost on the ice and frozen, they found nothing to eat. With the sun's rising they retreated up the hillsides and curled up where they could in the less cold rays, out of the wind.

Two Toes and his pack of seven or eight—they had met lonely and hungry pariahs who joined them that night—were scattered on the south side of a ridge. All of them slept a little during the day, despite their hunger.

The sleepers shivered, as did the wakeful ones. They betrayed their dreams by squealing and whistling under their breath. They struggled and writhed in their beds, as if they were running in full chase. When one of them awakened with a start, and looked around, blinking and licking his chops, his mates knew that he was sorry to wake up before feasting upon the blood that he had rushed upon in his dream!

They were a counterpart of other packs scattered all through that land of stone and green timber. Hunger was upon the wolf clan, which would show it plainer than other creatures, except perhaps the fisher. In days of plenty the pekan is the greediest of them all; in famine he attains a gaunt anger and hatred that makes him eat his own kind. But fisher travel alone!

The wolves, that second night, hunted farther. They did not stop to search around and under the bent-down clumps of brush. They did not take time to stick their noses into little holes and crevices. They ran along at a twisting trot, keeping their noses near the ice-crust.

Two Toes, going through the woods, held his head straight out in front of him. His eyes seemed to bulge out and the rims—the conjunctivæ—around them grew bloodshot. The forces of famine were working in him. He snapped into a dead rabbit that he chanced to find and made away with half of it before his

mates seized the rest and tore it from him.

The frozen meat was a mockery. It only raised a longing in the stomach of the wolf for something more satisfying. Toward morning Two Toes uttered a long howl and began to gallop instead of running. Favoring his crippled foot, he swung along almost on three legs; but the other wolves of his pack, harkening to his cry, did not try to go ahead of him. They knew better than that!

They fell in behind him. They no longer looked for frozen bits of meat. They stopped hunting in holes and under canopies and along the rims of overhanging boulders. They loped out of their scattered courses and fell in behind Two Toes, to follow him.

They well knew that cry—indeed they did! It was the rallying-cry of the packs; it was the leader's call to join in the hunt for blood!

From beyond the ridge came the answer of wolves of other clans. They galloped up over the divide and through the passes, and joined the pack of Two Toes at an angle, like one brook joining another. Here one wolf, there two or three, and now a pack of five or six, fell in behind Two Toes and hunted along.

The pack became a wave, long and narrow, pouring through the woods. Its sound grew louder and louder by degrees; but when the sunshine yellowed the sky overhead the yelps and cries shivered and broke off. The wolves could not run and hunt in the bright light of the day. Two Toes, disappointed, turned up a rocky hillside, and all his followers scattered along it, like a flock of great gray crows going to roost.

In their hiding-places they whistled and shivered and whined in the cold. Their drowsy slumbers were more than ever disturbed by dreams. Two or three of them barked so loudly and jubilantly in their sleep that half the pack rushed to the spot, thinking that it was a real feast to which they had been summoned. In their disappointment two or three pairs fell to

fighting one another. No sooner had one wolf wounded the shoulder of another, so that the smell of fresh blood smote their nostrils, than all the pack rushed in, tore the maimed victim to pieces where he fell, and bolted him down.

Two or three wolves, feeling themselves weakening, and seeing what had taken place, slunk away from that hillside and sneaked out into the lonely green timber, to hunt alone, and to die in peace, at the worst.

No sooner had the sun gone down than Two Toes left his bed and, with a sharp yelp, loped diagonally down the slope. The other wolves fell in behind him. They recognized in him some superior quality of leadership. Not one of them cared to have those sharp fangs snapping at his heels.

They did not even crowd him too close from behind. He ran two or three jumps ahead of the others, up hill and down ravine, across balsam swamp and over hardwood ridge. The wolves followed with their heads up, yelping and howling at intervals. Some of the pack was always in voice.

Two Toes hardly uttered a sound. He held his head straight ahead of him, a little down, if anything. As he bounded along, his lower jaw snapped up—up—up, and every snap was a click in the night. Perhaps it was that characteristic of silent voice and clicking teeth that made the other wolves let him run in the lead.

They had started as a pack of ten or twelve, but there were sixty ready for the hunt after sunset the following night. Other streamlets of wolves ran into the gathering, grisly flood. When they crossed Twin Falls River on the ice there were a hundred; and out of the east another wave, half as large, poured down toward them and mingled its smoking, yelping blood-lust into the major horde of famine.

It was this pack that French Louie heard washing by in the night, their voices sounding in the distance not unlike



those of a great flock of wild geese—not in tone, of course, but in their multitude.

The wolves swept through the timber like a shadow under the trees. In the swamp up the Pukasoo they ran into a warm scent. Two Toes swung into the trail, and the pack followed him.

Before they had gone a mile, Two Toes uttered a sharp cry and darted ahead. As the other wolves passed where he had yelped, they all howled frantically, for it was a whiff of blood. A moose had passed that way. He had broken through the ice when he began to run, frightened by the menace of the coming pack. When the moose galloped, the ice cut his forelegs, and soon they dripped red. He had done better to stand still, hoping for the wolves to pass him by unnoticed.

Now that they smelled the blood, the pack stretched out, but none of them drew very near to Two Toes, who ran more swiftly than the best of them. When the nearest wolves overtook him, he had the moose crippled with cut hamstrings, and the wave of famine poured over the unfortunate beast. It washed over him like a breaker over a rock—except that when the water recedes, the rock still remains unmoved. When the wolf wave passed and broke, the moose had disappeared. His bones were scattered over the ice, and by each bone a black shadow snarled and growled contentment.

Gray shades wandered back and forth among the possessors of bones, snapping and snarling. Others burrowed into the snow where the kill had been made, eating up the last pink discoloration.

Off at one side, on a little knoll, Two Toes lay on his stomach, his jaw on his forepaws, looking down at the little hollow where he had led the blood-lust to partial satisfaction. He stared at the army of wolves, breathing deeply. Little wisps of fog drifted past his head, and the moisture froze on his ears in crystals that reflected the sparkle of the stars overhead, so that he seemed to be wearing jewels—as indeed he was, for what has a finer glisten than such crystals in the starlight?

Some of the pack were still hungry, for they had had only nibbles. These were weaklings who had traveled last in the mighty pack, unable to keep near the lead. Their part of the spoil had been the blood-drips in the snow and the shreds of meat scattered around when the stronger wolves tore out the scalding chunks in the first rush.

That day the sky clouded over, and at night it began to snow. The snow fell so fast that the wolves did not wander far, though some of them scattered around for a mile or two. Up Pukasoo they found a dead moose, and a dozen or so of them ate their fill of it, too hungry to detect the bitter dose that had been prepared for them. Some of the wolves died on the carcass, with their teeth fastened in the meat. Others wandered to some distance, and had their death struggles alone when the frozen meat thawed and the strychnin worked into the live tissues.

These were not the strong brutes of the pack. They were the young, the very old, the sickly, and the weaklings. They were scarcely missed by the host that started out when the snow, which now lay five or six inches deep on the ice-crust, had stopped falling.

Two Toes and his big pack went hunting again, their appetites whetted, their confidence restored. All of them had withdrawn in terror from the deadly machines placed by that lone trapper who moved out of Otter Cove two or three times every moon, and returned heavy laden with the hides of so many wolves. He had trapped off the fools, the young, the careless; but these wolves who had gathered for the grand hunt, their last resort in time of sheer famine, were the pick of their tribe from Oiseau to below Dog River.

There were shaggy giants in the pack, who would weigh two hundred pounds or more. There were slender princesses who weighed less than fourscore pounds, but whose fleetness and alertness and savagery held them among the best.

There were a dozen former pack-leaders, content to follow the wolf who did not yelp or howl upon the trail, who galloped straight ahead and clicked his teeth at every jump. If one or two of the wolves did venture to dispute the leadership with Two Toes, they dropped back quickly, for one look into those bloodshot eyes, one glimpse of those fine white teeth spread for action, was enough to reveal the fighting spirit which enabled the wolf with the injured paw to hold his place.

On the bare sleet crust the pack left its claw-marks when it passed by. They were impressive reading, if one knew them. In the snow the wolves left a roadway, as it were. They galloped along, in long lines, making separate runways around brush-heaps and through narrows. In the open swamp and hardwood they spread out more widely.

It was harder running in the snow, but the snow was a revealer, and they struck into the tracks of fisher, which they followed and treed. Some fisher refused to run, but faced the hopeless odds and perished in a minute or two. If the fisher inflicted a bad wound on one of the wolves, the other wolves, maddened by famine, devoured their brother—as if in time, should the famine last long enough, the pack would consume itself!

In all, perhaps, five or six wolves went to stay the appetites of their fellows. A moose yearling was pulled down, and a few rabbits, whose tracks were found in the snow, were jumped and quickly lapped up in the grisly wave that roamed the green timber—always hungry, though always picking up a bit of meat here and there.

The pack ran down to Dog River and circled around, returning along the lake shore, sometimes out on the ice, sometimes breaking up over the ice-draped stones of the coast. They found a few dead fish in the frozen spume and among the heaped-up cakes of lake ice.

Always at the head of the wave raced Two Toes, gliding along over the rough

places, stretching out in a long lope where the running was good. He knew that only by covering a vast distance could that ravenous mob be fed, and he kept them going.

When they came to something to eat, a little eddy would form, where the food was sucked in, and then the pack straightened out again. They ran over a deer in that way. The black shadow of wolves upon the lake seemed hardly to pause in its sweep across the snow. The head of it crumpled up, swirled while the sides closed in, and then they all seemed to go on again; though as a matter of fact some of those who had bolted a paunchful lagged behind, turned out into the balsams, and curled down to sleep, ungnawed by hunger pains for once.

Thus the pack worked up to Pilot, where the sunlight overtook them, and they retreated from the lake shore into the stony hills, to lie in beds thawed in the loose snow. They had run sixty or seventy miles that night. They had sweated, and they spent some time in biting the balls of snow and ice that had frozen to their shaggy hair and weighted down their tails. They were tired, and all were more or less hungry. Some had had half a normal meal, some only a mouthful.

Two Toes climbed a little height and dropped upon his breast in the snow, rested his jaw on his forepaws, and looked down upon his pack. Upon him rested the responsibilities of leadership, and he was satisfied with what he had done. They were hungry, but they were not starving to death. They had to thank him for many a good morsel. Few wolves could boast of leading such a pack as that grisly gang.

On the following night he left the lake coast and struck inland, seeking moose. Big game must be found to preserve their lives, for morsels would not do. South of the Pukaso, in a little swamp, they found a moose and a yearling. They washed up on them in a writhing, heaving mound, and several were broken by the

frantic strokes of the cow's forehoofs; but her fight was in vain. She went down, and the mound of wolves sucked down into itself.

Many of the wolves had a full meal; most of them had something. Those who got only the leavings, and had to quarrel over the marrow, could not go out themselves into the snow and capture game. The weaklings and the sickly were left behind, to live or die as they could. Those that kept up must take what they could hold against their kind, and no more.

The weather had moderated. It was not so bitterly cold. The snow-storm seemed to have taken the sting out of the air. The snow on the crust had cut the ice, and the larger and heavier wolves began to break through the weakening subsurface. The big pack could no longer gallop with the free sweep of a squadron of cavalry. They had to run more and more in lines, the most powerful animals breaking the trails, the others following behind.

Two Toes, not an unusually heavy wolf, but with large paws, maintained his lead. He galloped along, his head always held low, and his teeth snapping at every jump. The other wolves had no desire to run ahead of him. They left him in the lead, but they ran up closer to him, for when he broke the trail they could make better time behind him.

Their next night was a hard one. The crust was so soft that they could hardly run at all, but had to plunge through the snow. They could not cover nearly as many miles as before. They licked up a few rabbits which were making runways of their own, and they found partridges under the snow, catching whiffs of them where they were buried. A nose poked deep, a sniff and a grab, and the next wolf helped to pick the bird and half a dozen helped to eat it, hardly losing a jump.

Dead tired, they ran down to the Twin Falls River, and after daybreak stopped where they happened to be, in a swamp opposite a stillwater. There they lay, all

of them hungry, all chilled and weary. They were too tired to go to the stream for a drink, but ate mouthfuls of snow where they lay.

Before sundown the hungriest of them were up and moving about uneasily. Two Toes rose from his bed and turned toward the east. They were slow in getting started. For a while they ran here and there, every wolf for himself, covering several square miles of territory; but by dark they knew that they must run again. They yelled their hunting cry, and through the timber from all sides they fell in behind Two Toes.

Thus they came to a warm trail that they all knew. It was the track of the Otter Cove man. He was in the deep wilderness. It was night. The best of it was that the trail was warm, fresh, and at intervals it showed the drip of blood—rabbit blood.

Two Toes ran over the trail, and was going to leave it behind, but close behind him were wolves who had overcome their natural fear of a man's track, who had appeased their hunger in other winters by following such a trail. One of these man-eaters gave a new yell when he struck into the fresh track. Turning from behind Two Toes, he led the whole pack in full cry upon it.

Two Toes ran on, with warning yelps and barks, but in vain. No promise that he could make would turn the course of that mob of wolves, frantic with hunger, their fears turned to deadly hate and blood-lust. They raced on, careless, reckless, and Two Toes turned in behind them all, his head held higher, watchfully, no longer the responsible leader, but a follower biding his time.

The wolves now roared and howled, crying their hunting yells as if they were after a fat moose. They had fled and slunk and crouched in terror while the man passed by; they had known his poisons and felt the grip of his steel machines. They knew the voice of his firearms, and had blinked in the glare of his fires. They recollected all these

things now, as they rang out their challenge. Lesser packs had pulled men down!

In that charging host were several wolves who pressed eagerly up to the front, for they remembered having been in such a race before, when they had made kills. Their fears were buried now in the mob spirit of numbers.

They had a man ahead of them, and soon they knew, keen trailers that they were, that the man was on the run—that he was not turning back to face them. They had jumped their game!

They split wide to keep from passing under his pack, where he had hung it upon a tree that he might run more swiftly. They split around the pack, but beyond it they returned to the trail, with flankers swinging wide and drawing ahead of the trail leaders, working ahead so that when their prey should turn to right or left he must strike into the wings of the pursuing host.

## XII

WHEN French Louie heard the wolf-pack pouring by between him and the lake, he nodded with satisfaction. The wolves were not all dead, he told himself gleefully. If the sleet had killed them, he would have had no satisfaction in life to speak of.

Now he must go forth to fix up his traps and to clear out the trails where the ice had broken down tops and branches into his right of way. In the morning, before dawn, he was eating breakfast, and with the first streak of light he set out. He carried his pack on his back, his game-bag, with a stock of poison capsules and poisoned tallow pills in it, his snow-shoes, and his bait and belt guns, with plenty of ammunition.

"By gar!" he grinned. "A feller don't know when he meet some bad t'ings runnin' aroun'!"

Trotting out on the crust, he stopped at the first trap on his line toward the main cabin, to cut out the well-sweep trigger, which was cased in ice. The trap

was ready for its cruel work, since it was under the porch of the cubby.

The next trap was frozen in solid, and he had to cut it out and shake in a new bed of balsam needles. The third trap contained a mink, which had entered after the well-sweep was frozen to its trigger.

In the hollow just beyond he found that a large pack of wolves had swept by, headed toward Pukaso. They had run down a long, gentle slope, and where they jumped their claws had scratched the crust. Those scratches on the crust made French Louie pause, for they dulled the light of the ice over a wide surface.

"By gar!" he cried, grimacing. "A hundred wolfs! Mebby two hundred wolfs! W'en dem fellers come to visit me, I clim', yo' bet! I clim' like a chickaree, an' I do my squeakin' from up in a tree-top, by gar!"

French Louie followed the trail of the pack backward for a few hundred yards, and then turned and followed it forward for the same distance. He could see where the wolves had bitten off birch-buds as they passed the shrubs in full cry. In the summer-time a wolf will dine on blueberries and other wild fruit, even when meat is plentiful. Now meat was not plentiful, and there was no doubt that the animals were hunting at speed, driven by fierce hunger.

French Louie returned to his trap-line and trotted along it, fixing the traps and shaking his head. He heard the squeaks of little birds which had survived the sleet and were now working in close to the tree-trunks, trying to find bare places from which they could extract their pitiful little supply of food.

At one place he turned from his line and with his trapping-ax released three grouse whose pecking at the ice he had heard. They had buried themselves in the snow, and now they were making futile efforts to pick their way out.

The old trapper carefully chipped out the ice, fearful lest a hard blow might stun the weakened birds. He broke the



three grouse out, and two of them flew away. The other bird lay on its side in his hand for a little while, gasping, before it, too, managed to fly a few rods to perch on one of the ice-clad limbs.

"By gar! Dem birds have a hard time findin' grub!" he said, shaking his head.

It was not all tragedy in the wilderness, however. French Louie startled a red squirrel as it sat upon a branch, eating cones which it had thriftily stored away the previous autumn. He was within five feet of the squirrel before it heard him, and then he squeaked like a weasel.

The squirrel leaped, struck an icy limb, lost its footing, and fell to the ice. Then it raced away in panic flight, up the lee side of a balsam, where the ice had not stuck fast. Seeing French Louie laughing and hearing him jeer, it chattered and burred and scolded, fairly jumping up and down, following the man for a hundred yards, angry at the trick that he had played.

The walking was so good that French Louie covered two sections of his trap-line, a long one and a loop, making about twenty miles in all. On the following day he covered about the same distance. He was well pleased with the prospect for a good and profitable season. All the weasel tribe were abroad, and he knew that from now on the hungry fur-bearers would come to his traps, tempted beyond endurance by the baits which he had placed just beyond the pans that released the jaws.

A less keen perception, a less acute vision than his, would have missed the faint scratches on the crust where the hungry creatures ran. French Louie could even see, if the slant of the sun was right, the faint blemish on the ice where the soft pads of foxes slightly stained the perfect polish.

Then the snow fell and covered the crust with a soft fluff, through which the survivors lunged and pounded. Foxes roamed far and wide; pekans plunged along, their short jumps showing how tired they were. The rabbits made deep

runways, and the few grouse which had found shelter under tight balsams, instead of diving into the snow, flew around seeking birch and other buds that were not incased in the ice.

The snow ate the ice off the branches, and gradually the limbs shook it clear. On the ground, the snow first absorbed the polish of the ice-crust and then granulated it, and only a line indicated where the frozen sheet had been. Then French Louie had to put on his snow-shoes, and the trip from camp to camp along his line strained his tendons and dragged heavily upon the muscles of his back.

The snow had circled into some of his cubbies, covering the mat of balsam needles. He had to brush it out, which took time. Moreover, his snow-shoes hooked into some of the fallen branches along the trail, impeding his progress. He was late making the midway point on his line from Otter Cove over the divide into the valley of Twin Falls River. He had only walked a short way from where he ate his lunch when the webbing of the snow-shoe on his right foot suddenly sagged down. When he looked to see what had happened, he uttered a screech of astonishment.

"Dat snow-shoe, dat good racket, new las' fall, break? Dat webbin' bruck up? No good, by gar!"

He stared at the snow-shoe, and then he swore loudly.

"W'en I knock de wet snow off, I bruise de rawhide!" he exclaimed. "Ain' dat an ole fool's trick, by gar! Me trap feefty year, an' I do dat mos' every winter, by gar! It make a feller sick. I got to feex it, jus' w'en I'm all hurry-up an' late, by gar!"

He sat down and proceeded to repair the snow-shoe webbing with pieces of rawhide string and light cotton trot-line. It was the only thing he could do. He worked fast, but that was not very rapidly. More than an hour went by, and he still had work to do.

At last he had the snow-shoe ready to walk upon, but the day was near its end,

and there was no time for him to fix his traps along the rest of his line. He must hurry on to reach shelter.

Dusk came early, but lasted long. Night fell, and still French Louie was tramping stolidly on his trail. He had been over it times enough now to have the feel of it under his feet, and to know it by its shadow. He had to favor his snow-shoes, for the left one was weak, too, where he had unthinkingly pounded the webbing to rid it of the weight of damp snow.

His ears were out in the night, listening. He heard owls, flying squirrels, and the unfreezing rifts of Twin Falls River, which flowed down in the gorge on his left, to the north. The line, following the river ridges and crossing the knobs of glacier-worn granite, had been cunningly picked so that he had good walking, except for the branches not yet cut out; but the snow sank under him with lumpy jerks, so that he did not know when it would hold him up and when it would let him down several inches or even a foot.

Then, in the far distance, he heard a tremolo of sound, rising and falling, like the beat of the waves down the river rifts. He stopped and listened, but did not say a word.

He listened for a minute or two, and then started on along his line again, taking long steps, fairly running. He had not gone far when he stopped and swung his pack up on a tree-limb. When he resumed his running, he did not sink so far in the snow, his steps were longer, and he held his bait-rifle in his left hand, swinging free.

He said nothing at all to himself, and uttered no sound. He was thinking, but only such thoughts as related intimately to the run that he was making. He watched the snow ahead, to make sure that he would not trip. He turned his left ear back, to hear what was coming in the wind.

He detected instantly when the wolves turned on the ridge-back behind him and

took up his trail. The howling of the hungry pack ascended to a crescendo of eager squeals, and then fell back to the long blood-cry of the fresh track in the snow.

"Now, by gar, French Louie look up a good tree, dat he will!" the trapper exclaimed immediately.

It was futile to try to reach his wigwam. Perhaps he was a lucky man that he had not sought shelter in the little bark tent up in the balsam swamp barely a mile ahead of him.

He stooped, pulled the slip-knots of his snowshoe-strings, and kicked his moccasins out of the toe-clips. He had his eye on a spruce-tree firmly rooted in a crevice on the top of one of the rocky knobs, around which the snow was bare for thirty or forty feet to the edge of the woods. The rock supported only a few low shrubs and, under the snow, moss and lichens.

French Louie easily drew himself up into the tree, and tied the snow-shoes over a branch eighteen or twenty feet from the ground. He cut away several of the lower branches, leaving three, almost on a level, to form a seat for him, about twelve feet above the ground. He had a good branch to rest his moccasins on, and he cut the ends of some of the other limbs which he could reach, so that he could look down at the snow all around the tree.

There were no theatricals, no light-someness of Gallic exclamation, during those few minutes of active preparation for a siege. The old trapper faced a peril too deadly, too imminent, for him to neglect any precaution or to waste a moment in playfulness.

### XIII

FRENCH LOUIE completed his defensive measures by slipping his belt over the stub of a limb behind him, to keep him from falling to the ground if he should be overcome by weariness or faintness. Now his work was done, and he could spare time for speech.

"By gar!" he said, with a grin. "Too bad for dem pore wolfs! Dey suffer such a disappoint', if de blue jay eat me, an' not dem pore hongry devils!"

Then the pack rolled up out of the woods and washed in a snarling, howling, upleaping swirl around the spruce-tree, scratching at the bark, biting off the ends of down-hanging limbs. The snapping jaws clicked above the rush of grisly bodies in the gloom.

"By gar! Dem fellers is hongry!" French Louie repeated. "Dey so hongry, by gar, I better feed 'em! I feed 'em some! I wonder where is dat ole Two Toes, whose track I see aroun' so much! Hello, Two Toes! Every feller keep still, so Two Toes can talk! Eh, speak, yo' ole feller!"

For reply the wolves almost split their throats, as they clawed up around the trunk of the tree. The old trapper looked down into twenty pairs of glowing eyes of a dull, fiery red, winking and turning. Among them were flashes of white streaks—the lines of teeth snapped shut, without lips to cover them.

French Louie drew his bait-bag around in front of him. He fished a rabbit out of it, and cut a piece of meat out of the ham. He flattened it out, and then wrapped in it one of the thin gelatin capsules containing four grains of pure sulphate of strychnin.

"I guess dem fellers stay aroun' long enough for dat skin to dissolve!" the trapper considered. "I got some tallow pills, but dem fellers ain' in no hurry to go depart, not yet!"

French Louie flipped the little pill, not more than an inch in diameter, out into the edge of the mass of wolves rearing up around the tree. He saw a commotion about where the pellet must have struck.

Then he made another pellet of the same kind, and threw that down. He molded a dozen or more of the pellets. He knew that the smell of fresh meat could not escape that keen-nosed, reckless pack. From the snarls and the swirls

in the dense crowd of wolves, he knew that where the pills landed the beasts snapped at them. Some unlucky ones must have bolted the bits of meat as they fell. The human scent did not matter to those ravenous creatures.

Then, suddenly, a wolf uttered a different cry—a squeal and a whistle. French Louie saw the animal charging away from the tree, turning and biting at itself.

"What?" the trapper exclaimed, in mock surprise. "Yo' no hongry for a tough ole trapper no more? By gar, I am surprise!"

He kept on molding the pills and throwing them down. He was economical of his meat, but not too much so. He threw down every one of his capsules and then tossed down the thirty-odd pills which he had molded out of tallow—little cubes of tallow, hollowed out, filled with the poison, and then plugged up and sealed with a hot knife-blade.

Long before he had fed down all his poison the savage blood-howls of the wolves had a steady accompaniment of cries of another kind—squeals of terror and agony. The eyes of the old trapper could see, in the gray mass below him, wild struggles and commotions as the poisoned brutes turned to fly away, a greater agony afflicting them than that of any hunger they had ever known.

Despite the poison, however, French Louie could not see that there was any apparent diminution in the number of the pack. He knew that most of the wolves in all that great territory had joined together in a mob that would not have to cavil or wait when they found any victim worth eating. They had killed—killed any game, from bull moose to timid rabbit. He had often seen the work of small packs, but never had such a pack as this crossed his trail before.

He had two firearms, the bait-rifle and the short-barreled holster-rifle. After his poison had all been thrown down, he waited a little while before beginning to shoot. There was no hurry.

It occurred to French Louie that it was time for him to have a smoke. Accordingly, he filled his pipe and struck a match on the bowl. As the flame lighted up, the wolves under him, some of them with their jaws hardly four feet from him, tumbled back and scattered out, retreating from around the tree, yelping with surprise and fear.

He could see their shapes against the packed snow around the tree. They retreated sidewise, with their jaws turned toward him, their eyes blinking and glowing in the light of the match, which lasted long.

When the match went out, some of the wolves returned to the tree with a rush, leaping high and snapping. Out in the white of the snow others were tumbling around, staggering and falling, then reeling to their paws again.

"By gar! A hundred—two, t'ree hundred wolfs!" French Louie cried, with a grimace. "One fine beeg pack, by gar! Dey lay aroun' in daytimes—dey keep me treed a veek! But I expec' I beegen to shoot now, by gar!"

He threw up the twenty-two-caliber bait-rifle, which he had fired thousands of times. With it he could hit the eye of a red squirrel, and he had killed many grouse on the wing with its small pellets of lead. He had only to point it and pull the trigger, and even in the murk he easily struck the lank brutes silhouetted against the snow.

He fired a dozen shots in quick succession. From the muzzle of the rifle dripped a spark or two of fire at each shot, and the sound was not much louder than the crackling of a branch. As the bullets struck, wounded wolves squealed with anger and pain, and started to race out of the little clearing.

A moment later, from the impenetrable dark of the woods around the little opening, there returned the sounds of a dozen dog-fights on a magnified scale. They were fights to the death, for the little bullets bled their victims, and at the first whiff of blood the other wolves

turned murderously upon the maimed brutes.

After those fights French Louie saw only a gray ghost or two, wraiths of the dark swamps, slinking along in the edge of the thick woods. He caught two or three glimpses of pairs of glowing eyes back in the gloom. Then silence fell, as suddenly as the noisy pack had broken into the little opening.

"By gar!" French Louie said, grinning. "Ain' I a good feller? I feed all dem wolfs! Dey well satisfied now! Come, doggie! Come, doggies! Good fellers! Let me pull your ears, doggies! By gar! I bet yo' run down ole French Louie agin, hey? By gar! I bet yo' wag your tails an' dance a jig, yo'll be so happy, seein' French Louie's track in de snow! I bet you will! By gar!"

But French Louie, though the silence of peaceful midnight was upon the forest, did not venture down from his tree. He remained on the branches where he had perched, and kept narrow watch of the surrounding woods. Sure enough, wolves still lurked in them. Several times he caught sight of those grisly shadows, and now he shot with the holster rifle. He landed one or two bullets, too.

Then for a long time the watchful old trapper saw nothing. Dawn began to show faintly in the east. Afar off he heard the hoot of an owl, and then the answer of another. Finally there came to his ears a distant yelp, the cry of a wolf—a kind of rallying cry, and yet only a tentative one.

French Louie laughed to himself when he heard his defeated enemy so far away.

"By gar! Dem wolfs gone away! I be'n a lonesome ole feller now!" the trapper exclaimed. "By gar! Why don' dem wolfs stay aroun' an' make good comp'ny fer a feller up a tree?"

Daylight arrived at last. French Louie dropped his snow-shoes to the ground and followed lightly. The snow around the spruce-tree was packed down hard by the springs of hundreds of sets of wolf-paws. Splotches of blood and scattered gray



hair on the snow told where wounded wolves had been torn to pieces by their cannibal comrades.

French Louie needed no snow-shoes for a hundred feet around the scene of his victory. Whichever way he turned, he found poisoned wolves drawn up or stretched out in the rigors of death.

"Now ain' dat a tam nuisance!" he growled. "By gar! I bet I got to skin feefty of dem tam wolfs! By gar! A feller got to work pretty hard for a livin', by gar, he has! I'm an ole feller, too! By gar!"

He dragged the carcasses to the spruce-tree in which he had taken refuge. He found dozens scattered around within a radius of two hundred yards—most of them within one hundred yards. He traced up other wolves which had gone farther, but whose trails showed the misery they had been suffering. He could tell by the track whether the beast had taken a pill or not.

French Louie had never seen such a pile of dead wolves in his life. He walked around it, chuckling, cursing, jeering, enjoying himself immensely.

Next he went back for his pack, and carried it with him to the pile of wolves, where he sat down and ate breakfast. He brewed a little can of hot tea, which he drank with gusto. Then he began to skin the brutes, shaking his head and exclaiming against the toil that was forced upon him by a cruel fate.

He was a long while skinning the animals and stretching their hides. He hung the pelts up to dry in a shelter he made at the nearest of his wigwams, in the next swamp beyond where he had been treed.

When the wolf-skins had been taken care of, he went on with his trapping. He followed up his lines over miles and miles of country. He crossed wolf-tracks going out, but none returning. The wolves were not running in packs, but in twos or threes, and many of them singly. When they reached the trap-line trail they launched themselves in the air

on one side, and fell in the snow far down the hill on the other side.

French Louie had looked at the paws of all the dead wolves. Not one but had the full complement of toes on the left front paw. All the wolf-tracks that were leaving the country also had their paws in good condition.

"Now where is dat ole feller Two Toes?" he asked himself. "By gar, I bet dem other fellers eat heem up! Now ain' dat too bad? By gar! Dey eat dat ole feller up, an' he give 'em a gran' ole run aroun'! I know dat feller's track when I see it! He led 'em, he did! Now I am disappoint'! Well, good-by, ole feller!"

After the next snow-storm French Louie did not see another wolf-track anywhere in the territory of his lines. There were foxes, pekans, marten, mink, and other fur in plenty; but all the wolves seemed to have gone.

#### XIV

LATE in March, down on Pukaso, the old trapper found a wolf-track in new-fallen snow, partly covered up. He picked the fresh flakes out of the track till he was at the bottom of it. He looked at it, felt of it, and then straightened up with an exclamation.

"By gar! Dat's an insult!" he grimaced. "Dat feller ain' gone yet! Two Toes ain' gone yet! He come along an' aroun' again!"

He found the same track on Twin Falls River, up on Swallow River, and where it led by his wigwams on two forks of his lines.

"Pore ole lonesome son of a goon!" he grumbled. "By gar! I feel sorry for dat ole feller. Ole Two Toes have a hard time, by gar! He get all crippled up in a trap, an' den he get all balled up in de col' an' sleet! Pore ole feller! Too bad I ain' got hees skin, by gar! But dat ole feller cross my track, when all dem other wolfs chased after me! By gar! He don' mean to harm me, an' he kep' right back in de woods, out of reach.

I read it in the snow! It was like in a book, by gar! He don' hurt me, an' by gar, I don' hurt heem! Dat's only right, by gar!"

Nevertheless, French Louie must needs follow up the track with great caution, his rifle all ready. Presently he saw the wolf on the opposite side of a ravine, all curled up and sound asleep, unconscious of the near approach of the enemy who had broken up his great pack, slaying its fiercest fighters and scattering the survivors.

French Louie raised his holster-rifle, drew down very steadily, and aimed for a long time; but he did not fire at Two Toes.

"By gar! A feller want to make sure!" he whispered to himself. "A feller don' want to make no mistake! By gar, a feller want to take good aim an' shoot straight!"

Always before, when French Louie had drawn a bead on a wolf, he had shot swiftly and surely; but this time he aimed and aimed. He changed the position of his feet, twisted his neck around till he had a crick in it, and looked into the muzzle of his rifle to make sure that nothing was in it to de-

flect the bullet; but still he did not pull the trigger.

Suddenly Two Toes leaped to his feet, gave a startled sniff at the air, and jerked his head. Then away the wolf glided in the woods over the snow.

"By gar! It ain' no use shootin' at one of dem fellers, w'en he roons!" French Louie shook his head. "If dat feller had laid still, an' my eyesight be'n all right, I bet I plug heem right t'rough de heart! Yes, I bet dat feller never would keek, eef he hadn't jump up an' run jes' when he did! I bet I would! By gar!"

Then the old trapper, chuckling to himself at his joke, turned back to his trap-line and followed it again.

"Anyhow," he grinned, "de winter is 'mos' gone, an' nex' time aroun' I take up de traps. Den I wait for de wind to be right, an' go over to Port Arthur in my boat. I bet dem fur-buyers look deir eyes out w'en dey see what a catch of mink, marten, lynx, pekans, an' foxes I have! Dem fellers ask, 'W'at yo' get dem wolfs for, anyhow? Dey ain' no good!' By gar! Not'in' but bounty an' t'ree, four dollaire a hide—dat what I tell 'em, by gar!"

THE END.

## COUNTRY NEIGHBORS

COUNTRY neighbors—

Those who meet  
With nod and smile  
And "time of day."

One may have  
His weekly drunk,  
One may scatter  
Oaths upon the highway,  
While the third is singing  
Gospel hymns.

One may talk of flowers,  
And one of swine.

Neighbors—  
Not from any kindred  
Drift of thought  
Or occupation,  
But because their several dwellings  
Face the same brown road.

Cora A. Matson Dolson

